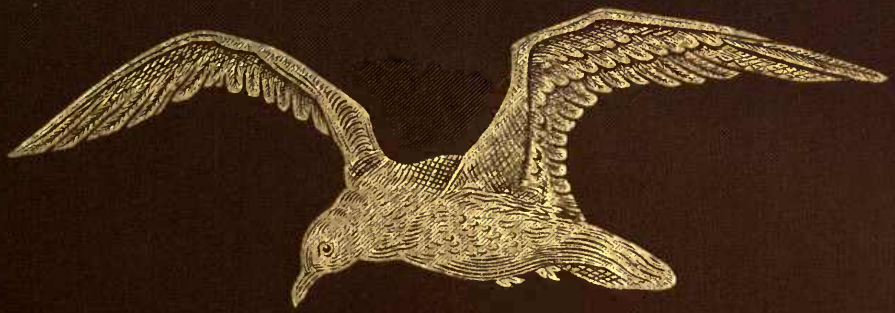

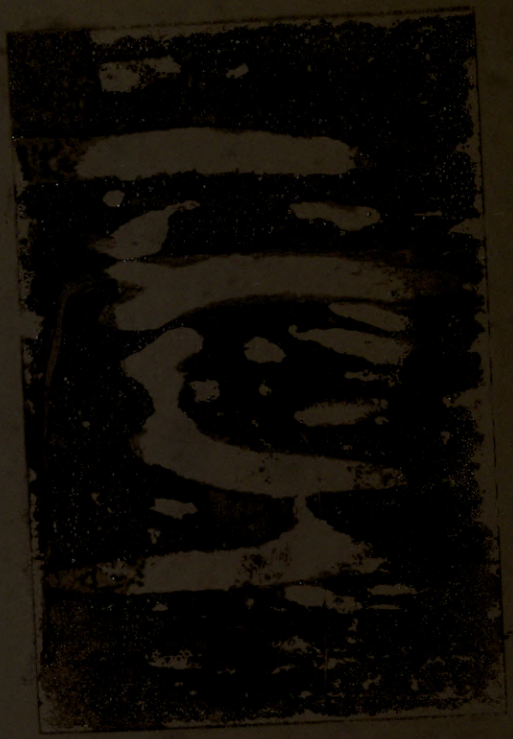

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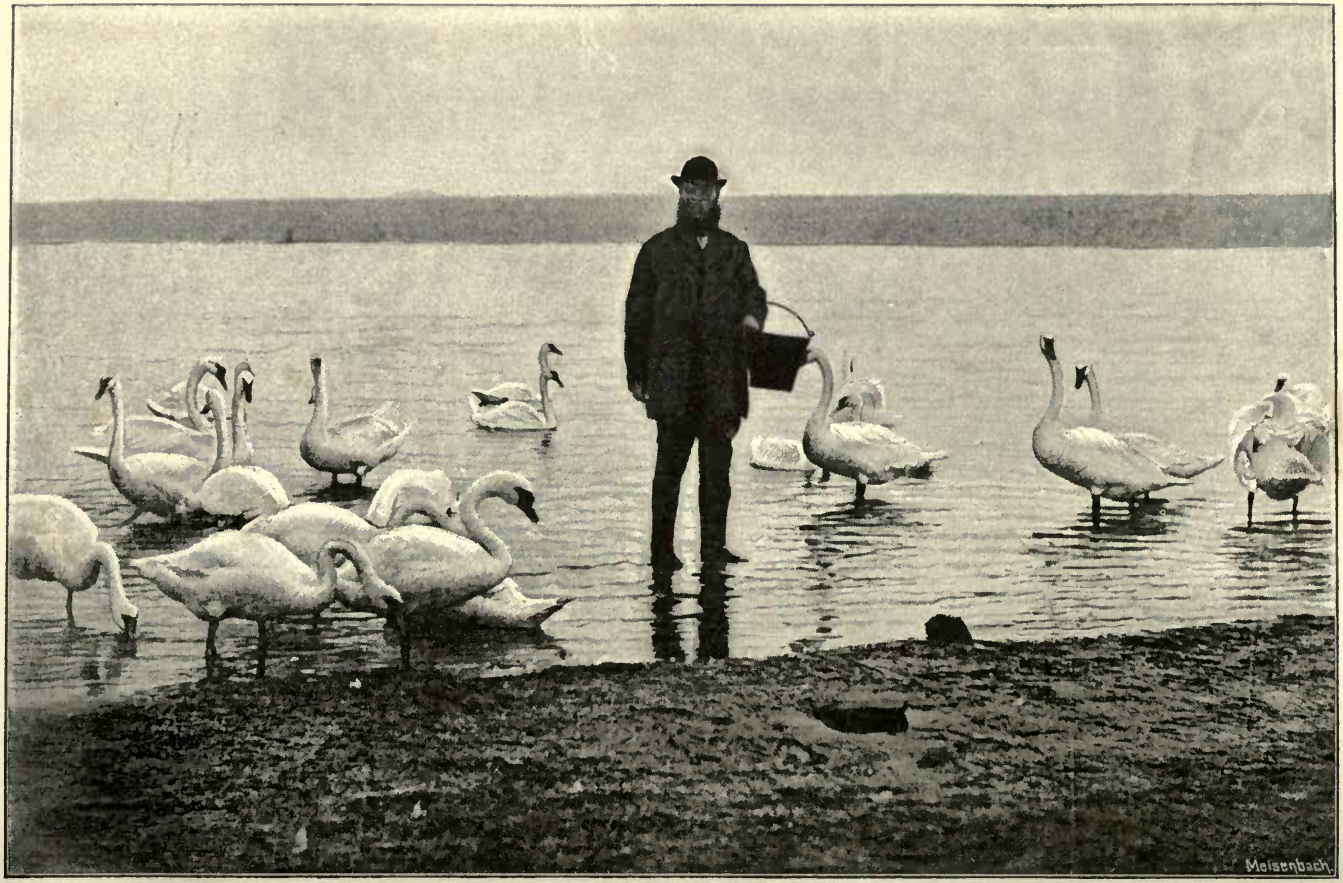

VIEW IN THE SWANNERY AT ABBOTSBURY. CHESIL BEACH IN THE DISTANCE.

THE

BIRDS OF DORSETSHIRE

A CONTRIBUTION

TO

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE COUNTY

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE never was a more favourable time than the present for the study of the history of the habits of birds. During the last ten years there have issued from the press, in parts, no less than four important ornithological works, three of which are now complete. (1.) Dresser's "Birds of Europe," in 8 vols. 4to, 1871–81, supplies a want which was only partially satisfied by Bree's "Birds of Europe not Observed in the British Islands," being, as its title implies, much more comprehensive. (2.) Yarrell's "British Birds," 4th edition, in 4 vols. 8vo, 1871–1885, of which the first two volumes (including the *Accipitres Passeres* and *Picariæ*) were edited by Professor Newton, and the last two (dealing with the remaining orders) by Mr. Howard Saunders. The important additions made to our knowledge since Yarrell's first publication on the subject, and embodied in this edition, makes it practically a new work. (3.) Seebohm's "British Birds," with coloured illustrations of their eggs, 3 vols. 8vo, 1883–85, an excellent work, containing much new and interesting information derived from the author's

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personal experience, gained not only in the British Islands, but in many parts of Europe, and notably in European and Asiatic Siberia, where the nests and eggs of many so-called rare birds were discovered. (4.) Booth's "Rough Notes on the Birds Observed during Twenty Years' Shoooting and Collecting in the British Islands," a folio work, which has been appearing in parts with coloured plates since 1881, and of which the last part has been now published, details the results of the author's own experience, and supplies much information concerning the breeding haunts and habits of birds generally accounted rare as observed in Scotland. The "Handbook of British Birds," by Mr. Harting; the article "Birds" by Professor Newton and Professor W. K. Parker, and "Ornithology" by Professor Newton, published in the ninth edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," may be mentioned as indispensable aids to those who would acquire a thorough knowledge of the British avifauna, and a key to its literature. As regards nomenclature—a difficult subject—the "Ibis List," which should be authoritative (having been published in 1883 by a committee of the British Ornithologists' Union), unfortunately contains many errors which, considering the reputation of the compilers, ought to have been avoided.

It has long been known that there are certain species of birds which reside only a portion of the year with us, arriving from the south in spring, and, after rearing their young in this country, depart southward again in the autumn. The males arrive first,

followed shortly afterwards by the females, and lastly by the young birds, which do not usually take so long a flight, some perhaps not getting farther than the European shores of the Mediterranean. Roughly speaking, there are three lines of migration taken by birds whose route lies southward in autumn, namely, the Spanish coast in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar, the Italian coast by Sicily, and the Greek coast by Cyprus. The first lands them on the opposite coast of Barbary, the second on the shore of Tunis, the last on the Asiatic coast at Tripoli. It is remarkable that these three routes cross the sea where it is narrowest and the most shallow, and were probably dry land in comparatively recent times.

Several birds, such as the Ring-Ouzel, Golden Plover, &c., pass through Dorsetshire on their migration northwards to breed. The migratory line of the Dotterel being outside our border, the bird visits us rarely; its last occurrence was in 1883.[1] A vast number of birds push their way as far north as the ice-line, a course which some naturalists assign to an hereditary instinctive impulse to return to the breeding-homes of their progenitors, which had an equable climate before the rigours of the glacial period had set in, and had forced them southward to seek food and shelter. Thus it is supposed the migratory habits of birds originated, and continue to the present day.

Seeing that the course of many birds on migration lies far east of these islands, any casual visitor

[1] See *Proc. Dorset N. H. Field Club*, vol. vi. p. 29 (1885).

can only be attributable to deflections by storms or adverse winds, which may account for the appearance of the Little Bustard, Common Crane, Cream-coloured Courser, Collared Pratincole, Glossy Ibis, Shore Lark, &c. Several birds, whose visits now are only few and far between, were formerly of more frequent occurrence, and some were even residents, such as the Great Bustard, Bittern, Common Crane, and Avocet. The Kite bred in Radnorshire as late as 1870. This might be attributable to a depletion of the species through various causes, such as altered conditions of country, drainage, clearance of woodlands, or even a multiplication of plantations and enclosures, which has probably caused the disappearance of the Great Bustard from our downs, which at one time were its favourite haunts.

Some birds have entirely disappeared from the face of the earth within the memory of man, or at least within historic times; notably the Garefowl or Great Auk (*Alca impennis*), which has become extinct since 1844, is the latest instance known of the extinction of a bird. In 1574 it was very plentiful on the east coast of Greenland. It lived in Scotland during the Pleistocene Age; its bones occur frequently in the kitchen-middens of Caithness, with those of the Wild Swan, Black Grouse, Seal, Walrus, and Beaver. The fortunate recognition of its egg in the hall of Mr. Philip Hill, of Pimperne, by the Rev. S. A. Walker, Rector of Spettisbury, rescued it from oblivion, the owner being unaware of its rarity and value, who, under Mr. Walker's advice, took it to the British

Museum, and ultimately sold it for £50 to Lord Lilford, one of our most distinguished British ornithologists. There are not more than seventy eggs and as many skins preserved in any public or private collection.

A gradual depletion of species is still going on, tending to reduce several of its members to what might be termed zero-point, whose reproductive powers are unequal to the task assigned by Nature to fill up the gap occasioned by death. In course of time these will be exterminated in their struggle for existence. The Wild Birds Preservation Act is doing good service, wherever enforced, among the sea-fowl and waders which frequent our shores during the nesting season, and has been the means of adding to their breeding-stations and colonies in this county.

There is an opinion gaining ground and advocated by some of our naturalists, that in the construction of their nests birds are more imitative than instinctive; that it is rather from memory they build a nest characteristic of their own species, both in shape and material. Birds hatched in confinement build only a rudimentary nest with the materials furnished them, without any typical construction. Some young Chaffinches which had been imported to New Zealand and turned out, built their nests with no resemblance to the English type, either in structure or material. The cup of the nest was smaller and longer, and made to hang loosely down the side of the branch on which it rested, in this respect resembling the

nests of the *Icteridæ*. Professor Newton shows, by several instances, "how the dictates of hereditary instinct are by a remarkable degree of elasticity, in some species, rudely broken." If I recollect right, he was present with me in the examination of a Heron's nest built on the united summits of a reed-bed, more than three or four feet from the surface of the surrounding water, on which floated the body of the unfortunate chick, which would not, in all probability, have come to so untimely an end, had the parents chosen the usual lofty and safer site for their nest than the reed-bed. (See p. 129.)

The annual moult to which birds are subject is an important provision for their preservation, and the means for restoring the injuries sustained between the periods of moulting. The wing and quill feathers especially are liable to be broken or split, so as to deprive the bird of power of flight, or at all events to impede its aerial progress. With the exception of the *Anatidæ* and *Spheniscidæ*, which shed their quill feathers simultaneously, and remain in a defenceless condition, hidden among sedge and grass, or keeping to the water until they have reassumed their full plumage, all other birds moult their feathers in pairs, by which an equilibrium is maintained, their flying powers remaining unimpaired.

Dorsetshire has a large and varied avifauna, owing mainly to its extensive seaboard and being in the migratory line of several birds. The coast includes the cliffs of St. Alban's, Gadcliff, Whitenore, Old Harry, and Durlston; the sandbanks of Small-

mouth and Studland; and the estuaries of Poole and Weymouth Fleet, at the head of which is a remarkable swannery, of which the Earl of Ilchester is owner, notable not only on account of its antiquity, but also as being the only swannery existing in Great Britain. The extensive tracts of down, heath, and woodlands which stretch away through the county have each their particular attractions to the various species whose habits and instincts are satisfied by food and other favourable circumstances. The Greater and Lesser Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Cormorant, and Shag share with the Razor-Bill, Guillemot, and Puffin the grand cliffs of Old Harry and Whitenore for rearing their young. The Common Tern has an extensive breeding colony on the Chesil Bank, where the Ringed Plover also breeds in great abundance.

The heaths and sandy wastes which border the estuaries of Poole and Weymouth offer nesting facilities to the Sheldrake, Pochard, Oyster-Catcher, Black-headed Gull, and Curlew. I received an egg of the last-named bird a few years since which had been taken from a nest near Poole Harbour. (See p. 100.) The chick it contained was hatched on the journey; it had burst through the shell, which was neatly broken in two in unequal parts, the lower one the largest, as is usual when the birth of the bird is natural. It was mature, covered with its characteristic down; the bill, although curved, was proportionally shorter than in the adult. The colour of its legs distinguished it from the young Stone Curlew, whose beak besides is short and straight. The chick is in the County

Museum collection. The Hen Harrier has nested here within the last three years. Unhappily it was shot after laying two eggs in a loosely-constructed nest. I saw the male several times afterwards; its shorter wings and more compact form distinguished it from the Montagu's Harrier, which is a more frequent visitor in these parts. The Stone Curlew breeds upon our upland fallows, and remains with us until the late autumn. The eggs of the Woodcock are very rarely found in Dorsetshire (I know only of one instance). The Dipper frequents the western side of the county, where it breeds; two broods have been known to have been reared in one year by the same parents. The Dartford Warbler, which was a constant resident in our heath districts until the rigorous winter of 1881 and several succeeding ones, has now disappeared. It is to be hoped there may be a few survivals, and that the heathlands of the county may be again graced by this lively little bird. The Peregrine holds its own in Purbeck, mainly owing to the protection it receives from the proprietors of the sea-cliffs, which are its principal breeding-places. The Chough has nearly succumbed to the senseless greed of egg-collectors, and its numbers are now so reduced that for some time past it has reached what I have termed zero-point. It is to be regretted that this harmless and graceful bird is not so abundant with us as it is in the Pyrenees, where, at Cauterets (in the spring of 1880), I fell in with two flocks, each numbering more than a hundred birds.

Amongst the rarer visitants to this county are the White-tailed Eagle, Iceland Falcon, Scops Owl, Pied Flycatcher, Woodchat, Blue-throated Warbler, Hoopoe, Golden Oriole, Rose-coloured Pastor, Little Bustard, Cream-coloured Courser, Collared Pratincole, Black-tailed Godwit, Black-winged Stilt, Glossy Ibis, Black Stork, Common Crane, Purple Heron, Night Heron, Squacco Heron, Little Bittern, American Bittern, Polish Swan, Red-crested Pochard, Ruddy Sheldrake, Buffle-headed Duck, Gadwall, Surf Scoter, Caspian Tern, Whiskered Tern, and Ivory Gull.

It cannot be doubted that if proper protection were afforded during the breeding season to our spring visitors, many would remain to breed with us; and attractive species such as the Hoopoe and Golden Oriole, which are destroyed almost as soon as they reach our coast, would take up their abode with us, and not leave until they had reared their broods.

It only remains for me to acknowledge the friendly aid which I have received from various correspondents in the preparation of this volume.

In the first place, I am desirous of expressing my great obligations to my friend Mr. J. E. Harting for having looked over the work for me, and for having suggested many useful and interesting additions which would otherwise have escaped record. To Mr. T. M. Pike, of Westport, Wareham, I am indebted for much information relating to the wild-fowl and sea-fowl of Dorsetshire, with which, as a practical observer and experienced wild-fowler, he is so well

acquainted. The courtesy of Mr. Edward Hart in replying to my inquiries, and in furnishing me with the history of the rarer birds in his beautiful museum at Christchurch, many of which were procured in Dorsetshire, also deserves recognition at my hands; while in addition, I have to thank many other correspondents, whose names are mentioned in the following pages, for communications of which I have gladly availed myself.

In the few wood engravings which are scattered throughout the volume, and which have been drawn and engraved by Mr. G. E. Lodge, I have selected for illustration some of the rarer or more remarkable birds, which, either as residents or accidental visitants, have been met with in the county of Dorset.

The "View in the Swannery" at Abbotsbury, which forms the frontispiece to this volume, was photographed during the summer of 1887, and has been reproduced by the "Meisenbach" process.

THE BIRDS OF DORSETSHIRE.

ORDER ACCIPITRES.

Fam. Falconidæ.

GOLDEN EAGLE. *Aquila chrysaetus*, (L.)

Yarrell,[1] i. p. 11; *Harting*, p. 3; *Dresser*, v. p. 533; *Seebohm*, i. p. 96; *Ibis List*, p. 96; *Pulteney's List*, p. 2.

Occasionally seen in England during the autumn migration, but may be said to be confined to the wildest districts of Scotland and Ireland. One was shot in Sherborne Park while feeding on a dead deer (*J. C. Dale*, "Naturalist," 1838, p. 173), and another seen in Christchurch Harbour, October 1885. The latter, however, was not heard of again in the neighbourhood.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE. *Haliœetus albicilla*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 25; *Harting*, p. 3; *Dresser*, v. p. 551; *Seebohm*, i. p. 87; *Ibis List*, p. 97; Falco ossifragus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 2.

The White-tailed Eagle is now only a rare straggler; it was more frequently seen here at the beginning of

[1] The references throughout this volume to "Yarrell" are intended to apply to the fourth edition of that work, edited by Professor Newton and Mr. Howard Saunders.

the century. It still breeds, however, in parts of Scotland, and in the rocky islands of the Hebrides and Shetland. "A full-grown bird was caught near Long Bridy, and lived many years in the aviary at Crichel; another shot at Morden Park" (Pulteney). One killed at Weymouth in 1857 is in the possession of Mr. Horner, Mells Park, Somerset; a pair frequented the Rempston Woods in 1860, one of which was trapped there by the keeper, the other was shot at Lulworth soon afterwards. One was seen at Kimmeridge in the winter of 1880, and after remaining there several weeks, left without suffering the usual fate of rare birds.

OSPREY. *Pandion haliœetus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 30; *Harting*, p. 3; *Dresser*, vi. p. 139; *Seebohm*, i. p. 55; *Ibis List*, p. 105; Falco haliœetus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 2.

The Osprey is not an unfrequent visitor to the estuaries of Poole and Weymouth, where several have been seen and killed. One frequented the neighbourhood of Weymouth the greater part of the summer of 1881. Another was killed on Rempston Heath the same year; a third at Weymouth, September 20, 1870, whilst being mobbed by a kestrel; a fourth was seen the following day, and escaped; a fifth, shot at Hyde in 1876, is in Mr. Radclyffe's collection. There are several records of the occurrence of the Osprey at Poole and the neighbourhood between 1846 and 1881. Contrary to its usual

habits, a pair frequented Wilton Park (thirty miles inland), during the summer of 1884, and were unfortunately killed.

ICELAND FALCON. *Falco islandus*, Gmelin.

Yarrell, i. p. 46; *Dresser*, vi. p. 25; Falco islandicus, *Harting*, p. 86; F. candicans, *Seebohm*, i. p. 16; Hierofalco islandus, *Ibis List*, p. 102.

An accidental visitor to Great Britain; one was found dead in the early part of the present century in Cranbourne Chase, with a pigeon half-eaten by its side, a bone of which had got across its throat and choked it. It is preserved in Viscount Portman's fine collection of birds at Bryanston.

PEREGRINE FALCON. *Falco peregrinus*, Tunstall.

Yarrell, i. p. 53; *Harting*, p. 4; *Dresser*, vi. p. 31; *Seebohm*, i. p. 23; *Ibis List*, p. 102; *Pulteney's List*, p. 2.

The Peregrine Falcon is the commonest of our larger birds of prey, and at present is well established in the county, owing to the protection extended to it by many of the landed proprietors. Purbeck is its headquarters, where precipitous cliffs afford an additional protection. In 1884 a nest was robbed from a cliff, but fortunately the old birds were not deterred from again occupying the same site, where, I am glad to say, they nested last year (1886). With the aid of my binocular, I distinctly saw one of the young birds standing on the nest, apparently well fledged, on the grassy ledge of

the cliff, far out of danger, although the parents displayed their anxiety by flying to and fro in the neighbourhood. I had been previously watching them for some time, little suspecting I was actually within sight of the brood, though with an unfathomable gulf intervening. A young bird of the year was shot at Milborne St. Andrews, in 1874; a pair near Wareham in 1880; another at Melbury, and one at Bryanston in 1881; a female and two young ones were seen at Chapman's Pool in August 1882. I have twice seen the Peregrine baffled in its stoop at a bird—once on the beautiful lake at Crichel. I had been watching one as it poised to and fro, keeping the wildfowl in an excited and uneasy state; suddenly it selected a Goosander which was flying a few feet above the water, when the latter, seeing its danger in time, eluded the stoop by as suddenly diving. The falcon rose in the air disappointed, and flew off to seek a less crafty quarry. The second instance occurred last summer (1886) on Ballard Down, near Studland. I observed a Peregrine which I had been watching suddenly fly out to sea in pursuit of a Jackdaw which was crossing the bay; the quarry perceiving its danger, began to "ring up," but finding itself baffled and the falcon gaining in altitude, most adroitly closing its wings, dropped perpendicularly to within a foot or two of the surface of the sea, and then recovering itself, made directly towards the cliffs, which it safely reached, and although still pursued, I believe it escaped. On three occasions I have seen a Pere-

grine hover in the air after the manner of the Kestrel, flapping its wings and then holding them perfectly motionless. Once I had the advantage of assuring myself that it was a Peregrine by the proximity of a pair of Kestrels which were hovering in their usual manner near enough for comparison.

HOBBY. *Falco subbuteo*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 65; *Harting*, p. 4; *Dresser*, vi. p. 69; *Seebohm*, i. p. 31; *Ibis List*, p. 102; *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

The Hobby, both in appearance and character, is a miniature Peregrine. It is a summer visitor to this country. Instances of its breeding in the eastern and southern counties have been frequently recorded. Mr. F. Bond has received eggs from Dorsetshire, and the Rev. O. Pickard Cambridge says it has regularly nested in the neighbourhood of Bloxworth until within the last few years. Mr. James Henning obtained nestlings from Middlemarsh Grange Woods; a male was shot at Kimmeridge in 1854, another at Long Burton in 1851, and one at Bryanston in 1852, now preserved in the Bryanston collection.

MERLIN. *Falco æsalon*, Tunstall.

Yarrell, i. p. 74; *Harting*, p. 4; *Dresser*, vi. p. 83; *Seebohm*, i. p. 34; *Ibis List*, p. 103; *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

This, our smallest Falcon, still breeds in the north of England and Scotland, retiring to the lowlands and cultivated districts during the winter months.

Although so diminutive in size, it is much prized by falconers for lark-hawking. Four of these little hawks passed through the hands of Mr. Rolls, bird-stuffer, Weymouth, in one year (Mr. Thompson); two shot at Glanville's Wootton (Mr. J. C. Dale); one killed at Wareham in December 1857; another at Lytchett Maltravers in 1872; two at the Roman Camp, Milborne St. Andrew's, in 1878; and a pair at Warmwell, near Dorchester, December 1886.

KESTREL. *Falco tinnunculus*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 78; *Harting*, p. 4; *Dresser*, vi. p. 113; *Seebohm*, i. p. 45; *Pulteney's List*, p. 3; Tinnunculus alaudarius, *Ibis List*, p. 104.

The Kestrel is abundant with us, especially near the sea, where it finds suitable and safe nesting-places among the cliffs. Several may be seen on a summer or autumn afternoon hovering over the furze-clad summits of the neighbouring heights in search of food. The ruins of Corfe Castle is a favourite haunt, and it is well distributed in the wooded districts of the county. As mice form its staple food, it deserves more protection than it receives. The indifference shown by birds in the hedgerows and farmyards on the approach of a Kestrel fairly indicates that it is not so great an enemy to the feathered tribe as is generally supposed. Contrast the excitement and alarm occasioned by a Sparrow-hawk flying overhead in rapid flight, ere the experienced eye of the keeper is aware of its transient presence.

GOSHAWK. *Astur palumbarius*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 83; *Harting*, p. 4; *Dresser*, v. p. 587; *Seebohm*, i. p. 142; *Ibis List*, p. 97; *Pulteney's List*, p. 3; *Naturalist*, ii. p. 173.

Although Professor Newton, in the fourth edition of Yarrell's "British Birds," mentions twenty-six instances of its occurrence in Great Britain, it is now a rare straggler. Pulteney speaks of it as not uncommon in his time, when game-preserving was not attended with such continuous persecution of birds of prey as at the present day, and when a larger extent of uncultivated country favoured its existence.

SPARROW-HAWK. *Accipiter nisus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 88; *Harting*, p. 4; *Dresser*, v. p. 599; *Seebohm*, i. p. 135; *Ibis List*, p. 98; Falco nisus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

There is a curious account of a sparrow-hawk's fate in the *Field*, November 20, 1876. A correspondent (*R. W. G.*, Weymouth) noticed a sparrow-hawk suspended by the claw from the top of a bush, and found it had been choked while endeavouring to swallow a mouse, which was firmly fixed in its throat.

KITE. *Milvus ictinus*, Savigny.

Yarrell, i. p. 92; *Harting*, p. 5; *Dresser*, v. p. 643; Milvus regalis, *Seebohm*, i. p. 74; *Ibis List*, p. 99; Falco milvus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

At the beginning of the present century the Kite was very common; it is now only an accidental

visitor. When the first edition of "Yarrell" was published, the Kite was numerous in the northern counties, and even bred in Huntingdonshire, where it is now extinct. It survives, however, in several districts of Scotland, and in parts of Wales. Pulteney speaks of it as common in his time, and the late Mr. J. C. Dale remarked that it was formerly plentiful in the Grange Woods, Middlemarsh. One shot at Bryanston is in Viscount Portman's collection; another was shot at Rempston; a third, procured in the neighbourhood of Dorchester, was presented to the County Museum by the late Mr. C. Herring; a fourth was shot at Bexington, near Abbotsbury (Rev. R. B. Roe); while the last on record was killed at Ashley, near Puncknoll, in April 1881.

COMMON BUZZARD. *Buteo vulgaris*, Leach.

Yarrell, i. p. 109; *Harting*, p. 6; *Dresser*, v. p. 449; *Seebohm*, i. p. 117; *Ibis List*, p. 94; Falco buteo, *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

The Common Buzzard is the most frequently seen of all the larger hawks; generally birds of the year from the Continent on migration. When hunting, it usually flies sluggishly near the ground, but rises to a great height spirally, careering aloft in wide circles. One was shot at Encombe in 1866, two at Kimmeridge in 1867, and a fourth at Peverel Point, Swanage, in 1866. Specimens are in the Bryanston and Rempston collections, as well as in the County Museum. When riding over "Bere Field" in Octo-

ber 1884, I observed a Buzzard flying low over the stubble pick up a Partridge, which it held screaming in its claws. I pursued it with a companion, when the Partridge was dropped and escaped unscathed.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD. *Buteo lagopus*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, i. p. 115; *Harting*, p. 6; Archibuteo lagopus, *Dresser*, v. p. 471; Aquila lagopus, *Seebohm*, i. p. 111; *Ibis List*, p. 95.

The Rough-legged Buzzard is a northern species, rarely visiting this county in autumn. Two passed through the hands of Mr. Rolls, bird-stuffer, of Weymouth, one of which was shot at Weymouth, the other at Creech Grange, in Purbeck; two shot in the neighbourhood of Blandford were in the collection of the late Mr. C. O. Bartlett; Mr. Hart, of Christchurch, stuffed a Dorsetshire specimen in 1857; and one was killed at Rempston in 1862. An immature bird shot at Morden Park in 1871 is now in the possession of the Rev. O. P. Cambridge, who saw one alive at Bloxworth in 1862; while the last on record was shot at Alderney Manor, Poole, in the autumn of 1879 (C. Hart).

HONEY-BUZZARD. *Pernis apivorus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 121; *Harting*, p. 6; *Dresser*, vi. p. 3; *Seebohm*, i. p. 69; *Ibis List*, p. 100; Falco apivorus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

The Honey-Buzzard is a summer migrant, and still breeds in favoured places in Great Britain, notably

in the New Forest. Unlike other raptorial birds, its usual food is the larvæ of bees and wasps, coleopterous and lepidopterous insects, and earthworms. It is to be regretted that so harmless a bird should not be exempt from persecution; but the fact of its being a hawk is sufficient in the eyes of game-preservers and collectors to ensure its destruction. There are Dorsetshire specimens preserved in the Bryanston and Rempston collections, and in the County Museum. Two passed through the hands of Mr. Rolls, bird-stuffer, of Weymouth, which were killed in the neighbourhood of Weymouth; one was trapped in Chetter Wood in the autumn of 1861, and another at Kimmeridge in the autumn of 1868. Its local name is "Capped Buzzard."

MARSH HARRIER. *Circus æruginosus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 127; *Harting*, p. 7; *Dresser*, v. p. 415; *Seebohm*, i. p. 124; *Ibis List*, p. 92; Falco æruginosus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

In Pulteney's time the Marsh Harrier was not unfrequently seen on the wet moors of the county; drainage has very much limited its favourite haunts since then. One in the Bryanston collection was caught in a trap, September 22, 1808. It still frequents the salt marshes between Wareham and Arne, where I have not unfrequently seen it. One was killed at Littlesea, Studland, in 1873, and another (a male) at Parkston in 1877.

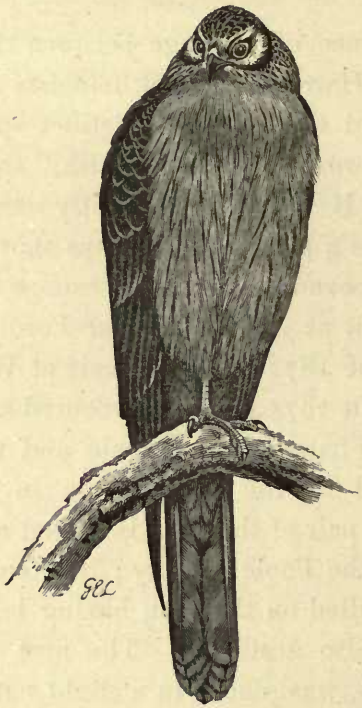
HEN HARRIER. *Circus cyaneus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 132; *Harting*, p. 7; *Dresser*, v. p. 431; *Seebohm*, i. p. 128; *Ibis List*, p. 93; Falco cyaneus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 3.

The difference of plumage between the male and female Hen Harrier led ornithologists in Bewick's time to regard them as two distinct species, designating the former the "blue hawk," the latter the "ring-tail." It is not unfrequently seen quartering the fields like a pointer. One was shot at Henbury in 1850; a second at Leeson, Swanage, in 1866; a pair were shot at Alderholt, near Fordingbridge, in the summer of 1872; and a female at Wareham the same year. In 1875 one was procured at Hyde, and another at Whatcombe. A male and two females, also obtained in the county, are in the County Museum. A pair of these birds nested on a piece of moorland in the Poole estuary; the female was unfortunately killed on the nest, having laid two eggs, which were also destroyed. The nest, composed of bents of grass, was placed in a slight natural depression. I saw the male bird twice after the death of its mate, near enough to distinguish it from Montagu's Harrier, which is more slightly built and longer in the wing. A male Hen Harrier frequented the neighbourhood of Bere Regis for several days in the early part of June 1887.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER. *Circus cineracius*, Montgu.

Yarrell, i. p. 138; *Harting*, p. 7; *Dresser*, v. p. 423; *Seebohm*, i. p. 131; *Ibis List*, p. 93.



Montagu's Harrier, which is smaller and more slender than the Hen Harrier, is occasionally met with in the county. One was killed at Wareham, September 1; one at Swanage, October 30; a second at Swanage, November 26, 1867; and a third at Swanage, 25th June 1869. One was seen at Lytchett Maltravers by Professor Newton in 1870, and one on Morden Heath in 1872; others

have been obtained at Bere Heath in 1871, at Studland, at Rempston, and on Wareham Heath in 1873. A male was shot near Wareham in July 1885, and in June 1887 a nest with four eggs, from which the hen bird rose, was found in a clover field at Winterbourne Kingston.

Fam. Strigidæ.

TAWNY OWL. *Strix aluco*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 146; *Seebohm*, i. p. 154; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4; Syrnium aluco, *Harting*, p. 8; *Dresser*, v. p. 271; *Ibis List*, p. 87.

This owl is abundant in the wooded districts and parks of the county.

BARN-OWL. *Aluco flammeus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 194; *Seebohm*, i. p. 148; Strix flammea, *Harting*, p. 8; *Dresser*, v. p. 237; *Ibis List*, p. 85; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4.

The Barn-Owl is more widely distributed than any other European bird of prey, except the Peregrine; and, in spite of its conspicuous plumage, escapes extermination owing to its nocturnal habits. It is very active in the dusk of evening, and can fly with great rapidity. On the appearance of a dog, it will cross and recross its path with the apparent intention of attack, and will almost touch its head with its noiseless wings, a curious and amusing sight. The following in connection with this bird appeared in one of our local papers:—"As a man was cutting

down a hollow ash-tree at Chalmington, he came upon an owl's nest containing two young owlets, for whose benefit the old pair had stowed away two nearly full-grown rats, a dozen mice, a couple of young rabbits, and three birds."

LONG-EARED OWL. *Asio otus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 158; *Dresser*, v. p. 251; *Ibis List*, p. 86; Otus vulgaris, *Harting*, p. 8; Strix otus, *Seebohm*, i. p. 160; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4.

The Long-eared Owl is less abundant than either of the two preceding species, being more restricted to the wooded districts of the county, notably the Chase Woods, Milton, Houghton, and Middlemarsh Grange Woods. A nest containing four owlets of this species was taken near West Lodge in 1865.

SHORT-EARED OWL. *Asio accipitrinus*, (Pallas).

Yarrell, i. p. 163; *Dresser*, v. p. 257; Otus brachyotus, *Harting*, p. 8; Strix brachyotus, *Seebohm*, i. p. 167; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4; Asio brachyotus, *Ibis List*, p. 86.

The Short-eared Owl is an autumnal visitant, arriving about the end of October. It used to breed in the fen-lands of the eastern counties, and, unlike the other owls, its nest is exposed and built upon the ground. It is locally called the "Woodcock Owl," arriving about the same time as that bird. Specimens have been obtained, amongst other places, at Bridport, Moreton, and Bryanston, the last in Viscount Portman's collection.

SCOPS OWL. *Scops giu*, (Scopoli).

Yarrell, i. p. 173; *Harting*, p. 93; *Dresser*, v. p. 329; *Ibis List*, p. 89; Scops scops, *Seebohm*, i. p. 193.

This, the smallest of the British owls, is an accidental and rare visitant. Mr. Harting (*l. c.*) enumerates twenty instances of its occurrence in Great Britain. One was killed at Buckland Ripers a few years ago (W. Thompson).

It may be well to note here that Mr. E. Meade Waldo, of Rope Hill, Lymington, during the last few years has turned out a great number of Little Owls (*Athene noctua*) in that part of the country, and it is not improbable that we may hear of the appearance of some of them in Dorsetshire, reported as visitors from the Continent, should the observers be unaware of the fact above stated.

SNOWY OWL. *Nyctea scandiaca*, (Daudin).

Yarrell, i. p. 187; *Dresser*, v. p. 287; *Ibis List*, p. 87; Nyctea nivea, *Harting*, p. 89; Surnia nyctea, *Seebohm*, i. p. 177.

The Snowy Owl is also an accidental visitant. It is essentially an Arctic species, straggling southward during hard winters. Mr. Harting enumerates twenty-two instances of its occurrence in Britain, excluding the Hebrides, Shetland, and Ireland, where at various times a good many have been met with. One shot at Langton Copse, in this county, is in Mr. Farquharson's collection.

ORDER PASSERES.

Fam. Laniidæ.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE. *Lanius excubitor*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 199; *Harting*, p. 9; *Dresser*, iii. p. 375; *Seebohm*, i. p. 598; *Ibis List*, p. 37; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4.

The Grey Shrike is a rare winter visitant. Seen in the Chase Woods; one killed in Almer Wood, and another near Weymouth (Pulteney); one shot at Stafford, near Dorchester; one at Lewell (J. C. Dale). A few passed through the hands of Mr. Rolls, bird-stuffer at Weymouth, which had been shot in that neighbourhood (W. Thompson). One shot at Little Bridy in 1863 (A. E. Eaton). The last on record was shot at Lytchett Maltravers in 1872 (Hart).

RED-BACKED SHRIKE. *Lanius collurio*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 209; *Harting*, p. 9; *Dresser*, iii. p. 399; *Seebohm*, i. p. 606; *Ibis List*, p. 38; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4.

The Red-backed Shrike is one of our latest summer visitants, arriving early in May and leaving in August. It breeds here regularly, and may often be seen in our orchards and hedgerows; very seldom in woods, preferring the open country.

WOODCHAT. *Lanius auriculatus*, Müller.

Yarrell, i. p. 215; *Dresser*, iii. p. 407; Lanius rutilus, *Harting*, p. 9; Lanius rufus, *Seebohm*, i. p. 610; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4; Lanius pomeranus, *Ibis List*, p. 38.

The Woodchat is a rare visitant. Pulteney says, "I have not seen the Woodchat, but am assured it has now and then been shot in Dorsetshire." One was killed at Bloxworth (Rev. O. P. Cambridge), and another seen at Lyme Regis, June 22, 1876 (Lister, *The Field*, July 8, 1876). Some eggs of the Woodchat in the County Museum are stated to have been taken from a Dorsetshire nest.

FAM. MUSCICAPIDÆ.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER. *Muscicapa grisola*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 220; *Harting*, p. 10; *Dresser*, iii. p. 447; *Seebohm*, i. p. 323; *Ibis List*, p. 40; *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

This solitary little bird arrives here about the middle of May, and soon after commences building its nest, usually selecting holes in trees and walls, especially in gardens and orchards, the nest being not unfrequently placed on a horizontal branch of some wall-fruit tree. A pair reared a brood two years consecutively in the wall of the yard of the Winterbourne Whitchurch village school.

PIED FLYCATCHER. *Muscicapa atricapilla*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 229; *Harting*, p. 10; *Dresser*, iii. p. 453; *Seebohm*, i. p. 328; *Ibis List*, p. 41.

The Pied Flycatcher is a rare visitant to Dorsetshire. It breeds in the Lake District, in the Yorkshire Dales, and in Wales, as well as in the south of Scotland. Three passed through the hands of Mr. Rolls, of Weymouth, which had been shot at Bloxworth, and one was shot at Glanvilles Wootton. A manuscript note by the late Mr. J. C. Dale, in his copy of "Pulteney's Catalogue," states that Selby possessed a Dorsetshire specimen. A pair was shot in the grounds of Corfe Castle Rectory in May 1879.

FAM. ORIOLIDÆ.

GOLDEN ORIOLE. *Oriolus galbula*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 233; *Harting*, p. 10; *Dresser*, iii. p. 365; *Seebohm*, i. p. 589; *Ibis List*, p. 36.

The Golden Oriole is an accidental summer visitant, and has been met with in several parts of the county. A male bird was seen at Bloxworth for more than a week in 1854 (Rev. O. P. Cambridge, *Zoologist*, p. 4366); another was shot at Affpuddle (Rev. C. R. W. Waldy); one was seen on the hills behind Kimmeridge in 1867, and one shot at Bradford Peverell, September 1872. A pair visited Chandler's Copse, Buckland Newton, April 1874 (C. S. Glyn); one was

seen near the North Lodge, Moreton, May 9, 1885; a male was shot between Swanage and Corfe Castle, June 1885. "The nest has been found in Kent several times, and in Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and Sussex" (Harting, "Handbook of British Birds," p. 10). Its gaudy plumage, however, often causes its destruction. If protection were only afforded to it on its arrival in April, it would in all probability nest regularly here, and return to the same breeding haunts (as is the case with many other migratory birds); our eyes would often be gladdened by its resplendent plumage flashing among the foliage of our glades and groves, and our ears by its melodious flute-like notes.

Fam. Cinclidæ.

DIPPER. *Cinclus aquaticus*, Bechstein.

Yarrell, i. p. 241; *Harting*, p. 10; *Dresser*, ii. p. 167; *Seebohm*, i. p. 253; *Ibis List*, p. 23.

The Dipper is only known on the western side of Dorsetshire. So long ago as 1830 a pair was shot at Sadborough, near Bridport. A pair built their nest for three consecutive years (1883–85) under an accommodation wooden bridge in the valley of the Bredy, and brought up four broods, of which two were hatched in 1885. Mr. William Thompson, of Weymouth, saw one in the flesh in the hands of Mr. Rolls, of Weymouth. One was seen at Long Bredy in 1885, and another on the stream between Lyme Regis and Uplyme in August 1887.

Fam. Turdidæ.

MISSEL-THRUSH. *Turdus viscivorus*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 258; *Harting*, p. 11; *Dresser*, ii. p. 3; *Seebohm*, i. p. 207; *Ibis List*, p. 1; *Pulteney's List*, p. 10.

The Missel-Thrush, although now so common, was extremely scarce at the end of the last century; so much so, that Bewick had some difficulty in procuring a specimen. His description in the edition of 1804 is without a figure.

SONG-THRUSH. *Turdus musicus*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 264; *Harting*, p. 11; *Dresser*, ii. p. 19; *Seebohm*, i. p. 213; *Ibis List*, p. 2.

The Song-Thrush, although a resident, is partially migratory in the autumn. Sportsmen when beating the turnip-fields in October and the beginning of November see them rising at every few yards; and although in considerable numbers, they do not appear to be gregarious, but rise singly as they are disturbed. They migrate during the night, and during the day rest under the turnip-leaves for food and shelter. In the exceptionally dry summer of 1885, the innumerable broken shells of snails under the walls and on the waysides testified to the destructive power of the Thrush upon land mollusks when deprived of their ordinary food.

REDWING. *Turdus iliacus*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 268; *Harting*, p. 11; *Dresser*, ii. p. 35; *Seebohm*, i. p. 220; *Ibis List*, p. 2; *Pulteney's List*, p. 10.

Unlike the Song-Thrush, the Redwing is essentially gregarious. It is an autumn visitor, arriving early in October. It is reported to have nested in four English counties, as well as in North Wales. See *Zoologist*, 1855, p. 7427, and *Ibis*, 1865, p. 19.

FIELDFARE. *Turdus pilaris*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 272; *Harting*, p. 11; *Dresser*, ii. p. 41; *Seebohm*, i. p. 228; *Ibis List*, p. 2; *Pulteney's List*, p. 1.

The Fieldfare arrives later than the Redwing, about the beginning of November. It breeds within the Arctic circle, but farther south than the Redwing, to the limit, and occasionally beyond, the forest growth. It is said to have nested in this country, but Mr. Seebohm considers that farther proof of the statement is necessary.

BLACKBIRD. *Turdus merula*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 280; *Harting*, p. 12; *Dresser*, ii. p. 91; Merula merula, *Seebohm*, i. p. 235; *Ibis List*, p. 4.

The Blackbird is a resident, but, like the Song-Thrush, migratory in the autumn. This has been abundantly proved by the numbers which have been observed at the lighthouses and lightships during the period of migration.

RING-OUZEL. *Turdus torquatus*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 287; *Harting*, p. 12; *Dresser*, ii. p. 113; *Ibis List*, p. 5; *Pulteney's List*, p. 10; Merula torquata, *Seebohm*, i. p. 243.

The Ring-Ouzel is a spring and autumn migrant, but resident in the North of England and Scotland, where it habitually breeds. Rodd states that many remain on Dartmoor and on the Cornish moors, and may be seen through the summer with their nests, eggs, and young; but this is not the case in Dorsetshire, where they are only seen on migration. In the wild Houghton district they are regularly observed, especially in the autumn; several were seen last year (1886), and three together at Thorncombe. Several flocks were noticed at Poole in October, and at Weymouth also in the autumn; a pair were shot at Gorwell in 1862. In 1878 a pair were observed at Turnworth all the winter, as reported by Mr. H. G. Parry Okeden, in the *Field* of February 15, 1879.

FAM. SYLVIIDÆ.

HEDGE-SPARROW. *Accentor modularis*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 301; *Harting*, p. 12; *Dresser*, iii. p. 39; *Seebohm*, i. p. 497; *Ibis List*, p. 22; Motacilla modularis, *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

This familiar little bird is a constant resident with us, and generally distributed.

REDBREAST. *Erithacus rubecula*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 305; *Harting*, p. 12; *Dresser*, ii. p. 329; *Seebohm*, i. p. 262; *Ibis List*, p. 10; Motacilla rubecula, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

The Redbreast, as is well known, at the approach of winter draws in towards human habitations and homesteads from its favourite summer haunts, woods, shrubberies, and hedgerows, and in very severe weather migrates to great distances. It is a regular migrant on the Continent, and thousands are killed annually for food in the South of France and Italy. Many young birds bred in England habitually migrate southwards. Mr. Seebohm says that the young of most birds rarely, if ever, remain in the locality of their birth. My gamekeeper, W. Shave, who is a good naturalist, tells me the Redbreast is invariably his constant companion when ferreting or rabbiting, at all seasons of the year, even in the densest and remotest woods on the estate, and will fearlessly hop from twig to twig, eyeing the worms as they are brought to the surface by the spade, and picking up the crumbs which are kindly thrown to it from the luncheon-basket.

NIGHTINGALE. *Daulias luscinia*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 312; *Dresser*, ii. p. 363; *Ibis List*, p. 11; Luscinia philomela, *Harting*, p. 15; Erithacus luscinia, *Seebohm*, i. p. 276; Motacilla luscinia, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

A common summer visitant on the *eastern* side, rarer on the *western* side of the county, which is

nearly the limits of its range. Seldom seen on account of its secluded habits, it secretes itself when alarmed among the weeds, grass, and thick undergrowth. The males arrive about a fortnight before the females.

RED-SPOTTED BLUE-THROAT. *Ruticilla suecica*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 321; Cyanecula suecica, *Harting*, p. 102; *Dresser*, ii. p. 317; *Ibis List*, p. 10; Erithacus suecica, *Seebohm*, i. p. 269.

The three forms of Blue-Throated Warblers—*suecica*, with a red spot in the centre of a blue throat (*Motacilla suecica* of Linnæus), *Sylvia leucocyanea* of Brehm, with a white spot in the centre of the blue throat, and *Sylvia Wolfii*, with the entire throat blue—are regarded by Mr. Harting as probably one species in different phases of plumage. The Northern or Arctic form, *suecica*, is said to have been killed in Dorsetshire (*J. C. Dale*, "Naturalist," ii. p. 275). There is a specimen of the European Blue-Throat, *leucocyanea—E. cyaneculus* of Seebohm—in the Salisbury Museum, belonging to the collection of the late Mr. Cox, a resident in Dorsetshire, but with no indication of the locality whence obtained.

REDSTART. *Ruticilla phœnicurus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 329; *Harting*, p. 12; *Dresser*, ii. p. 277; *Seebohm*, i. p. 287; *Ibis List*, p. 8; Motacilla phœnicurus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

The Redstart is a summer migrant by no means common in the county. It arrives in April, and

haunts localities similar to those of the Wheatear. One in my collection was taken out of a cat's mouth at Whatcombe in May 1870. Seen at Stoke Wake, May 15, 1875, and on Charlton Down, July 15, 1886.

BLACK REDSTART. *Ruticilla tithys*, (Scopoli).

Yarrell, i. p. 333; *Harting*, p. 13; *Dresser*, ii. p. 293; *Ibis List*, p. 9; *Seebohm*, i. p. 293.

This little bird is one of our winter visitants. One was killed at Tarrant Keynston, in the winter of 1867 (Rev. J. H. Austin); one at Gussage All Saints, in 1868 (Rev. R. W. A. Waldy); two at Lytchett Maltravers as early as August 1840, and another in December 1843. One was seen by Mr. W. Thompson on the leads of his house at Weymouth. Mr. E. Hart tells me that several Dorsetshire specimens passed through his hands in 1864 and 1865. I have in vain searched for it among the coves along the coast, which are its favourite haunts in Devonshire. The origin of the specific name *tithys* is explained by Mr. Harting in "Our Summer Migrants," p. 79.

STONECHAT. *Saxicola rubicola*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 399; *Harting*, p. 13; Pratincola rubicola, *Dresser*, ii. p. 263; *Seebohm*, i. p. 317; *Ibis List*, p. 8; Motacilla rubicola, *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

A constant resident with us, frequenting the open downs and heaths, and building its nest on the ground. In very severe weather it retires to more

sheltered spots. Its restless flight and sharp call-note are familiar to every one, as it displays its attractive plumage and black head on the highest branch of a furze-bush or thorn-spray.

WHINCHAT. *Saxicola rubetra*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 344; *Harting*, p. 13; Pratincola rubetra, *Dresser*, ii. p. 255; *Seebohm*, i. p. 312; *Ibis List*, p. 7; Motacilla rubetra, *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

Unlike the preceding species, the Whinchat is a summer migrant, arriving in April. Its habits are less local, extending to pastures and cultivated districts.

WHEATEAR. *Saxicola œnanthe*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 347; *Harting*, p. 13; *Dresser*, ii. p. 187; *Seebohm*, i. p. 298; *Ibis List*, p. 6; Motacilla œnanthe, *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

The Wheatear arrives on our coast towards the end of March. It is less plentiful now than in Pulteney's time, who says, "In Portland it is called the 'Snorter.' They are caught in great numbers in traps in the island. More than thirty dozen are said to have been taken in one day. A person who disposes of them in the Weymouth market, I have been told, paid £30 to one man in the year 1794 for Wheatears at one shilling a dozen, and is said to have been supplied with fifty dozen more than could be disposed of." They appear in large numbers in Purbeck about the middle of September, congregating there preparatory to migration. They breed freely on

our downs, often choosing unused rabbit-burrows for their nesting-places, as well as stone walls and old rotten molehills.

REED WARBLER. *Acrocephalus streperus*, (Vieillot).

Yarrell, i. p. 369; *Dresser*, ii. p. 567; *Ibis List*, p. 18; Salicaria strepera, *Harting*, p. 14; Acrocephalus arundinaceus, *Seebohm*, i. p. 367.

A summer visitant, arriving here about the first week in May. It usually makes its nest interwoven between willow twigs overhanging the streams. It is oftener heard than seen, but may be occasionally observed clinging to a perpendicular reed or flitting from one side of the river to the other.

SEDGE WARBLER. *Acrocephalus schœnobœnus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 376; *Dresser*, ii. p. 597; Salicaria phragmitis, *Harting*, p. 14; Acrocephalus phragmitis, *Seebohm*, i. p. 352; *Ibis List*, p. 20; Motacilla salicaria, *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

This Warbler is also a summer visitant. It arrives with us before the Reed-Warbler, from which it differs in habits in not confining itself exclusively to the vicinity of rivers and marshes. It may be seen and heard at a considerable distance from either. It is a shy bird, and makes itself known by its harsh scolding notes as it threads its way through the hedgerows and thick willows of the river-banks, where it usually builds its nest.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER. *Acrocephalus nævius*, (Bodd).

Yarrell, i. p. 384; Salicaria locustella, *Harting*, p. 14; Locustella nævia, *Dresser*, ii. p. 611; *Ibis List*, p. 20; Locustella locustella, *Seebohm*, i. p. 340.

The Grasshopper Warbler arrives here in April and leaves in September. Its creeping habits keep it very much out of sight, and but for its prolonged trill, resembling that of a grasshopper, it would be passed by unnoticed. It is a constant visitor to the neighbourhood of Blandford. I saw one on Chamberlayne's Heath in June 1876, and heard one in Clenston Wood as late as September 4 of the present year. A nest, containing five eggs, in the County Museum, was taken in Houghton Heath, among some sedge grass, by Colonel Stuart.

DARTFORD WARBLER. *Melizophilus undatus*, (Bodd).

Yarrell, i. p. 398; *Dresser*, ii. p. 441; *Ibis List*, p. 14; Sylvia undata, *Harting*, p. 16; Sylvia provincialis, *Seebohm*, i. p. 414.

The Dartford Warbler is a resident, confining itself chiefly to the heathy districts of the county. Sir Edward Newton and I had the rare opportunity, on June 8, 1876, of watching a pair on Studland Heath feeding their young. After short intervals, they returned with a small green caterpillar in their bills, which was soon disposed of by the little nestlings, which were hidden in a thick furze-bush. This species has been seen at Blackdown (a tertiary outlier); on Houghton Stubbs, a considerable distance

from the heath district, but where a few tertiary plants grow, the remains of a flora which probably existed previous to the denudation of the superincumbent bed; and at Fairmile, between Blandford and Stickland, July 1877. A nest and eggs were found at Bloxworth by the Rev. O. P. Cambridge ("Naturalist," v. p. 190). I have a specimen in my collection which was shot on Bere Heath in August 1870. There are records of its occurrence in the neighbourhood of Poole, Canford, Morden, and

Lytchett Heaths; also at Vernon Heath, Ensbury, and West Parley. It was frequently seen previous to the severe winter of 1880–81, which it is to be feared nearly exterminated the species. Mr. O. Pickard Cambridge saw one in 1886 at Bloxworth, but in all probability this and other survivors succumbed to the severity of the past winter of 1886–87, and it is doubtful whether we shall any longer see our heaths enlivened by this active little bird.

WHITE-THROAT. *Sylvia rufa*, (Bodd).

Yarrell, i. p. 406; *Dresser*, ii. p. 377; Sylvia cinerea, *Harting*, p. 16; *Seebohm*, i. p. 405; *Ibis List*, p. 11; Motacilla cinerea, β., *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

This is one of our commonest summer visitants; it arrives towards the end of April, and may often be seen on the top spray of a hedgerow, or rising in the air sending forth its short, jerky song. It is very shy, taking every precaution for concealment, invariably keeping on the off-side of a hedge to elude the notice of the passer-by.

LESSER WHITE-THROAT. *Sylvia curruca*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 410; *Dresser*, ii. p. 383; *Seebohm*, i. p. 410; *Ibis List*, p. 12; Sylvia sylviella, *Harting*, p. 16.

The Lesser White-Throat is also a summer visitant, though less common than the preceding, but not sufficiently so to require special notice. It is generally distributed. Professor Newton found its nest at Bloxworth in June 1876.

BLACKCAP. *Sylvia atricapilla*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 418; *Harting*, p. 15; *Dresser*, ii. p. 421; *Seebohm*, i. p. 394; *Ibis List*, p. 12; Motacilla atricapilla, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

A common and regular summer visitant, vieing with the Nightingale in the power and sweetness of its song.

GARDEN WARBLER. *Sylvia salicaria*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 414; *Dresser*, ii. p. 429; Sylvia hortensis, *Harting*, p. 15; *Seebohm*, i. p. 400; *Ibis List*, p. 13.

The Garden Warbler is a late summer visitor, frequenting shrubberies, woods, plantations, and gardens, where its sweet soft song may often be heard in May.

WOOD WREN. *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*, (Bechstein).

Yarrell, i. p. 427; *Dresser*, ii. p. 497; *Seebohm*, i. p. 426; *Ibis List*, p. 17; Phyllopneuste sibilatrix, *Harting*, p. 17.

A summer visitor; the males precede the females by several days. It frequents the wooded districts of the county. A brood was hatched and reared in Longthorns Wood in June 1871; the nest was domed and placed on the ground, resembling that of the Willow Wren, but differing from it in the absence of feathers; it was lined with grass and hair.

WILLOW WREN. *Phylloscopus trochilus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 432; *Dresser*, ii. p. 491; *Seebohm*, i. p. 430; *Ibis List*, p. 16; Phyllopneuste trochilus, *Harting*, p. 18; Motacilla trochilus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

A common summer visitor, and one of the earliest migrants to arrive. It may be seen as early as March, flitting from branch to branch in search of food in every crevice and angle with the utmost assiduity. It builds its nest on the ground, which is lined with a profusion of feathers.

CHIFFCHAFF. *Phylloscopus collybita*, (Vieillot).

Yarrell, i. p. 437; *Dresser*, ii. p. 485; Phyllopneuste rufa, *Harting*, p. 18; Phylloscopus rufus, *Seebohm*, i. p. 435; *Ibis List*, p. 16.

The Chiffchaff is another very early visitor in spring. Its well-known double note is usually heard for the first time about the middle of March. Its dark legs may serve to distinguish it from the two preceding species, whose legs are pale brownish flesh-colour.

GOLD-CREST. *Regulus cristatus*, Koch.

Yarrell, i. p. 449; *Harting*, p. 19; *Dresser*, ii. p. 453; *Seebohm*, i. p. 453; *Ibis List*, p. 14.

A common resident, breeding regularly with us. An interesting note by Mr. S. J. Salter on the occurrence of large flocks of this little bird in Dorsetshire in winter will be found in the *Zoologist* for 1848, p. 2020.

FIRE-CREST. *Regulus ignicapillus*, (C. L. Brehm).

An occasional visitant. The first British specimen brought to the notice of naturalists was killed by a cat near Cambridge in August 1832. Many have since been met with. One was shot at Parkstone, another at Cerne, and Mr. E. Hart reports that four were shot near Christchurch during the winter of 1884.

Fam. Troglodytidæ.

WREN. *Troglodytes parvulus*, Koch.

Yarrell, i. p. 460; *Harting*, p. 19; *Dresser*, iii. p. 219; *Seebohm*, i. p. 505; *Ibis List*, p. 29; Motacilla troglodytes, *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

Resident, and generally distributed throughout the county.

Fam. Certhiidæ.

TREE-CREEPER. *Certhia familiaris*, Linn.

Yarrell, i. p. 468; *Harting*, p. 20; *Dresser*, iii. p. 195; *Seebohm*, i. p. 512; *Ibis List*, p. 45.

Like the last named, this species is resident, and generally distributed in the parks, shrubberies, and wooded districts of the county.

Fam. Sittidæ.

NUTHATCH. *Sitta cæsia*, Meyer.

Yarrell, i. p. 473; *Harting*, p. 20; *Dresser*, iii. p. 175; *Seebohm*, i. p. 523; *Ibis List*, p. 28; Sitta europæa, *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

The Nuthatch is a resident and extremely common in the county, where it breeds freely. It can ascend and descend the trunks and branches of trees with

equal ease, and without the aid and support of the tail, as is the case with the Woodpeckers. The northern Nuthatch, described by Linnæus as *Sitta europæa*, is distinct from the Central European species, which occurs in the British Islands, and which is distinguished as *Sitta cæsia*.

Fam. Paridæ.

GREAT TITMOUSE. *Parus major*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 479; *Harting*, p. 20; *Dresser*, iii. p. 79; *Seebohm*, i. p. 463; *Ibis List*, p. 26; *Pulteney's List*, p. 9.

Resident, and common everywhere.

BLUE TITMOUSE. *Parus cæruleus.*

Yarrell, i. p. 483; *Harting*, p. 20; *Dresser*, iii. p. 131; *Seebohm*, i. p. 468; *Ibis List*, p. 27; *Pulteney's List*, p. 10.

Like the last named, a common resident.

COAL TITMOUSE. *Parus ater*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 489; *Harting*, p. 21; *Ibis List*, p. 26; *Pulteney's List*, p. 10; Parus britannicus, *Dresser*, iii. p. 93; *Seebohm*, i. p. 472.

The form of *Parus ater*, which has been described as *Parus britannicus*, is apparently confined to the British Islands, where it is a resident and abundant species. The typical *ater* visits us occasionally on migration, from which ours differs in the feathers of the back and flanks being tinged with olive-brown.

MARSH TITMOUSE. *Parus palustris*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 495; *Harting*, p. 21; *Dresser*, iii. p. 99; *Seebohm*, i. p. 476; *Ibis List*, p. 27.

The Marsh Titmouse is resident and locally abundant, frequenting well-timbered parks and shrubberies without reference to the neighbourhood of water, although equally partial to marshy places and river-sides. Mr. Seebohm divides the species into eight varieties, each of which he considers occupies a well-defined geographical area. One of them, *Parus borealis*, Mr. Dresser regards as a distinct species.

LONG-TAILED TITMOUSE. *Acredula caudata*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 504; Acredula rosea, *Harting*, p. 21; *Dresser*, iii. p. 63; *Seebohm*, i. p. 486; *Ibis List*, p. 25; Parus caudatus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 10.

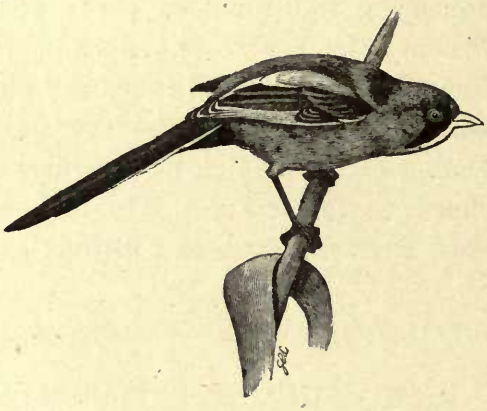
The Long-tailed Titmouse is a resident, frequenting woods, shrubberies, and orchards. It is gregarious during the autumn and winter, when it may be seen in small flocks flitting from tree to tree in search of food. Like the Coal Titmouse, the British form of the Long-tailed Titmouse (*rosea* of Blyth[1]) differs from Linnæus's Scandinavian form, *Parus caudatus*, which has a white head, and is occasionally met with in these islands.

[1] White's "Natural History of Selborne," edited by Blyth, 1836, p. 111, note.

Fam. Panuridæ.

BEARDED TITMOUSE. *Panurus biarmicus*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 511; *Harting*, p. 22; *Seebohm*, i. p. 492; *Ibis List*, p. 24; Calamophilus biarmicus, *Dresser*, iii. p. 49.



The Bearded Titmouse must be regarded as a rare and very exceptional visitor to Dorsetshire, although an established resident in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. Several have been met with on the Fleet at Abbotsbury, and five or six are said to have been shot there by Captain Latour (W. Thompson).

Fam. Ampelidæ.

WAXWING. *Ampelis garrulus*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 523; *Harting*, p. 23; *Dresser*, iii. p. 429; *Seebohm*, ii. 3; *Ibis List*, p. 39; *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

The Waxwing is an occasional winter visitant from the north, arriving spasmodically and in some num-

bers. One killed near Shaftesbury in 1785 is mentioned by Pulteney; another was shot at Bexington (Rev. R. B. Roe); a third, shot at Abbotsbury in January 1850, is preserved in the County Museum collection; a fourth frequented the garden of Little Bridy Rectory during the winter of 1855 (Rev. A. E. Eaton); a fifth was shot in a hedgerow adjoining the Weymouth Cemetery on December 10, 1858; another which was seen at the same time escaped.

Fam. Motacillidæ.

PIED WAGTAIL. *Motacilla lugubris*, Temm.

Yarrell, i. p. 538; *Dresser*, iii. p. 239; *Ibis List*, p. 30; Motacilla yarrelli, *Harting*, p. 23; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 194; Motacilla alba, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

The Pied Wagtail is to a certain extent a resident, although in the autumn large numbers are seen on the coast which are probably migrating southwards for the winter. The return journey in spring has been noticed by other observers on the coast of Sussex.

WHITE WAGTAIL. *Motacilla alba*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 548; *Harting*, p. 23; *Dresser*, iii. p. 233; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 199; *Ibis List*, p. 29.

The White Wagtail is an annual summer visitant. It was first noticed as a British bird in 1841, although abundant on the other side of the Channel. Mr. Gould received one from Poole in March 1861, and several were shot in Kimmeridge Bay in May 1877.

GREY WAGTAIL. *Motacilla sulphurea*, Bechstein.

Yarrell, i. p. 552; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 203; Motacilla boarula, *Harting*, p. 23; *Pulteney's List*, p. 8; Motacilla malanope, *Dresser*, iii. p. 251; *Ibis List*, p. 30; *Nature*, vol. xxxvii. p. 6.

The Grey Wagtail is a winter visitant in Dorsetshire. It is frequently seen from October until May, occasionally in company with the Pied Wagtail. A young brood was hatched at Fordingbridge in the month of June (Mr. James Rawlence); Professor Newton saw one at Bloxworth quite late in the summer. It is more frequently observed on the western side of the county.

YELLOW WAGTAIL. *Motacilla raii*, (Bonaparte).

Yarrell, i. p. 564; *Dresser*, iii. p. 277; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 212; Motacilla rayi, *Harting*, p. 23; *Ibis List*, p. 31; Motacilla flava, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

The Yellow Wagtail is a summer visitant, frequenting the pastures and marshes on the sea-coast. It has been observed in the pastures of Kimmeridge feeding upon the insects disturbed by the cattle.

FAM. ANTHIDÆ.

TREE PIPIT. *Anthus trivialis*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 569; *Dresser*, iii. p. 309; *Ibis List*, p. 33; Anthus arboreus, *Harting*, p. 24; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 219; Alauda minor, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

The Tree-Pipit is a summer visitant, arriving about the end of May. It chooses for its haunts timbered

hedgerows and outskirts of woods. Pulteney erroneously described it as a resident and not migratory, probably confounding it with the next species. A nest with eggs was taken near Blandford by Mr. Bosworth Smith.

MEADOW PIPIT. *Anthus pratensis*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 575; *Harting*, p. 24; *Dresser*, iii. p. 285; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 224; *Ibis List*, p. 32; Alauda pratensis, *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

Resident, and common on the heaths and dry moors.

ROCK PIPIT. *Anthus obscurus*, (Latham).

Yarrell, i. p. 586; *Harting*, p. 24; *Dresser*, iii. p. 343; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 244; *Ibis List*, p. 35.

The Rock Pipit is a common resident on the coast, from which it seldom wanders, nesting in the rocks and under stones out of reach of the tide.

RICHARD'S PIPIT. *Anthus richardi*, Vieillot.

Yarrell, i. p. 598; *Harting*, p. 24; *Dresser*, iii. p. 325; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 233; *Ibis List*, p. 34.

A rare visitant, which, so far as I am aware, has only twice been met with in this county. It differs from the preceding species by its greater size, longer tarsus, enormously developed hind-claw, and by the outer tail-feathers, which are nearly pure white. One was shot in the neighbourhood of Weymouth, and another at Ringstead in the autumn of 1882, by the late Mr. H. Pickard Cambridge.

Fam. Alaudidæ.

SHORE LARK. *Octocorys alpestris*, (L.)

Yarrell, i. p. 604; *Dresser*, iv. p. 387; *Ibis List*, p. 73; Alauda alpestris, *Harting*, p. 25; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 284.

The Shore Lark is an irregular winter visitant, occurring more frequently on the east coast of England than in the south. Two were shot at Weymouth in the winter of 1868, and one at Lodmoor, December 3, 1869.

SKYLARK. *Alauda arvensis*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 614; *Harting*, p. 24; *Dresser*, iv. p. 307; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 266; *Ibis List*, p. 71; *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

A common resident, congregating after the breeding season in considerable flocks, when doubtless many quit the country to pass the winter farther south.

WOODLARK. *Alauda arborea*, L.

Yarrell, i. p. 625; *Harting*, p. 25; *Dresser*, iv. p. 321; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 256; *Ibis List*, p. 71; *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

Resident in the wooded districts of the county, where it is not uncommon. Yarrell cites Dorsetshire as one of the English counties which it especially frequents. It differs from the Skylark in its smaller size and shorter tail, and, unlike that songster, frequently sings while perching. Mr. Bosworth Smith has found the nest and eggs in the neighbourhood of Bradford Abbas.

Fam. Emberizidæ.

SNOW BUNTING. *Plectrophanes nivalis*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 1; *Dresser*, iv. p. 261; *Ibis List*, p. 63; Emberiza nivalis, *Harting*, p. 25; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 125.

The Snow Bunting, or, as Willughby quaintly terms it, the Great Mountain Finch, is an accidental visitant in winter. One was procured so long ago as 1844 at Houghton, another at Kimmeridge in February 1868, one at Poxwell (Rev. O. P. Cambridge), and five near Weymouth, December 28, 1869.

REED BUNTING. *Emberiza schœniclus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 23; *Harting*, p. 26; *Dresser*, iv. p. 241; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 135; *Ibis List*, p. 62; *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

Resident and common in the neighbourhood of streams and marsh ditches: its black head and white collar render it very conspicuous as it perches or flits among the reeds, uttering its grating call-note.

CORN BUNTING. *Emberiza miliaria*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 38; *Harting*, p. 26; *Dresser*, iv. p. 163; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 148; *Ibis List*, p. 59; *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

The Corn Bunting is a common resident, found chiefly in the open parts of the county. It may be recognised by its monotonous and harsh note, usually uttered from the topmost spray of some hedgerow, fence, or telegraph wire. It is not shy, but continues its song even on the approach of the passer-by.

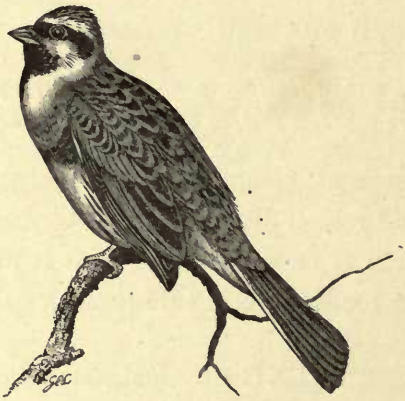
YELLOWHAMMER. *Emberiza citrinella*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 43; *Harting*, p. 26; *Dresser*, iv. p. 171; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 160; *Ibis List*, p. 60; *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

A well-known resident, flocking in winter, when it may often be found in the rickyards with Sparrows, Greenfinches, and Chaffinches.

CIRL BUNTING. *Emberiza cirlus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 50; *Harting*, p. 26; *Dresser*, iv. p. 177; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 156; *Ibis List*, p. 60.



The Cirl Bunting is resident, and not uncommon in Dorsetshire in the neighbourhood of the coast. It is not readily distinguished from the Yellowhammer by an ordinary observer. The chief feature of distinction is a black streak on each side of the face, and a black patch on the chin. One was shot at Poxwell (Rev. O. P. Cambridge), and others

have been procured at Sherborne, August 2, 1882 (*Naturalist*, vol. ii. p. 250), Kimmeridge, Charmouth, Langton, Blandford, and Ensbury, near Wimborne (Rev. J. H. Austen). Mr. W. Thompson had one alive in confinement, which was caught at Weymouth, December 23, 1870. Two were shot at Langton Maltravers in August 1884, and three were seen on Houghton Stubbs, July 10, 1886. A nest and eggs were found in Warnwock Valley, August 9, 1877.

Fam. Fringillidæ.

CHAFFINCH. *Fringilla cœlebs*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 68; *Harting*, p. 27; *Dresser*, iv. p. 3; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 100; *Ibis List*, p. 52; *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

A well-known resident, and generally distributed throughout the county.

BRAMBLING. *Fringilla montifringilla*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 75; *Harting*, p. 27; *Dresser*, iv. p. 15; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 96; *Ibis List*, p. 52; *Pulteney's List*, p. 12.

The Brambling is a winter visitant, arriving late in autumn, and in some years in great numbers. Pulteney says: "Great numbers were seen in Dorsetshire in the winter of 1789–90, and were very plentiful in the nursery-garden, Blandford, in the winter of 1795." In the winters 1872–73 and 1880–81 it was particularly numerous, associating with sparrows and chaffinches. It has been observed

at Kimmeridge, Milborne St. Andrew's, Houghton, Clenston, Little Bridy, and Weymouth. It was very abundant at Wareham and the neighbourhood during the severe winter of 1886–87.

TREE-SPARROW. *Passer montanus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 82; *Harting*, p. 28; *Dresser*, iii. p. 597; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 69; *Ibis List*, p. 51.

Resident, but, unlike its congener, the House-Sparrow, its usual abode is far removed from human habitation, although it frequents the farmyards in winter. It prefers the wild and open parts of the country. I have notes of one shot near Blandford and two at Bishop's Caundle (J. C. Dale), one at Ensbury, in March 1861 (J. H. Austen), and one seen at Bloxworth by the Rev. O. P. Cambridge. A small flock was seen at the west end of the Down House plantation, November 30, 1886.

HOUSE-SPARROW. *Passer domesticus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 89; *Harting*, p. 28; *Dresser*, iii. p. 587; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 63; *Ibis List*, p. 51; Fringilla domestica, *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

A common resident; subject to occasional variation of plumage. Specimens of a buff colour, and others with more or less white about them, have been procured at Winterbourne Kingston, and elsewhere in the neighbourhood.

HAWFINCH. *Coccothraustes vulgaris*, Pallas.

Yarrell, ii. p. 98; *Harting*, p. 29; *Dresser*, iii. p. 575; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 57; *Ibis List*, p. 50; Loxia coccothraustes, *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

The Hawfinch can only be regarded as an occasional visitant, though it appears to be resident in the adjoining county in the New Forest. Its shy habits exempt it from the usual fate of showy birds. Mr. W. Penney states that a pair once nested in the garden at White's Place, Poole, and that one was caught there in January 1881. Large flocks arrived in the winter of 1872–73, when two were taken alive at Upwey (W. Thompson), and one was shot at Melbury Osmond (Rev. R. B. Roe). I have records of others procured at Kimmeridge, Whatcombe, Holt, Wimborne, Poole, Chettle, Affpiddle, &c. A nest and eggs were found at Thorncombe, near Blandford (Bosworth Smith).

GREENFINCH. *Coccothraustes chloris*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 105; *Harting*, p. 29; Ligurinus chloris, *Dresser*, iii. p. 567; *Ibis List*, p. 49; Fringilla chloris, *Seebohm*, ii. p. 74; Loxia chloris, *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

A common resident, generally distributed, assembling in flocks in winter. An unusual site for a nest was a hollow on the top of a gate-post at Poxwell in 1880. A curious circumstance occurred to me last year (1886) in connection with a Greenfinch. While riding fast through a narrow roadway, a Greenfinch suddenly flew across, and meeting my horse's knee or hoof while in the act of flying, was struck on the head and flung to the off side, reversing the direction

of its flight, which was from right to left. Observing this, I dismounted, and found the poor bird senseless, but without a feather displaced or a limb injured. It was probably only stunned, but of this I could not wait to assure myself.

GOLDFINCH. *Carduelis elegans*, Stephens.

Yarrell, ii. p. 117; *Dresser*, iii. p. 527; *Ibis List*, p. 47; Fringilla carduelis, *Harting*, p. 27; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 87; *Pulteney's List*, p. 12.

A resident species; frequenting gardens, shrubberies, and orchards, and resorting in autumn to the open downs and commons to feed on the thistle-seed. Small flocks may then be seen passing along with jerky flight, and sharp, quickly-repeated call-notes. Since the Wild Birds Preservation Act came into force, I am glad to note that Goldfinches have become more numerous. Several small flocks visited the downs of Whatcombe in the autumn of 1887.

SISKIN. *Carduelis spinus*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 126; Fringilla spinus, *Harting*, p. 27; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 92; *Pulteney's List*, p. 12; Chrysomitris spinus, *Dresser*, iii. p. 541; *Ibis List*, p. 48.

The Siskin is a winter visitant, and one of the rarest of our Finches. Pulteney says it has been seen in the neighbourhoods of Hanford and Blandford, but is more frequent on the eastern side of the county. A flight of these little birds arrived near Ensbury in January 1848 (J. H. Austen); a pair brought to Mr. Thompson were shot near Weymouth, October 18, 1872; one was shot at Lodmoor,

November 20, 1876; and others have been seen on the banks of the river at Chamberlayne's, Bere Regis; and on the Stour, at Bryanston. According to Mr. A. G. More, "the nest has been found in Dorsetshire" (*The Ibis*, 1865, p. 129).

LESSER REDPOLL. *Linota rufescens*, (Vieillot).

Yarrell, ii. p. 146; *Harting*, p. 28; *Dresser*, iv. p. 47; *Ibis List*, p. 54; Fringilla rufescens, *Seebohm*, ii. p. 115; Fringilla linaria, *Pulteney's List*, p. 12.

Although a resident in the North of England, the Lesser Redpoll is usually only a winter visitant here. Pulteney says, "It is not uncommon in Dorsetshire, particularly among alders and willows." Mr. Seebohm says, "It has been found breeding in the greater number of English counties east of Somerset;" and according to Mr. A. G. More (*Ibis*, 1865, p. 129), it "nests occasionally in Dorset." I have notes of its occurrence on the banks of the Stour (Pulteney), and at Lodmoor, near Weymouth, Nov. 1, 1871, Nov. 15, and Nov. 20, 1872 (W. Thompson). A nest and eggs were found at Thorncombe, Blandford (Bosworth Smith). So far as I am aware, the Mealy Redpoll, *Linota linaria*, has not been recognised in Dorsetshire.

LINNET. *Linota cannabina*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 153; *Harting*, p. 27; *Ibis List*, p. 53; Linaria cannabina, *Dresser*, iv. p. 31; Fringilla cannabina, *Seebohm*, ii. p. 106; *Pulteney's List*, p. 12.

Resident, and generally distributed; flocking in winter upon the heaths and uncultivated wastes.

TWITE. *Linota flavirostris*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 160; *Harting*, p. 28; *Dresser*, iv. p. 59; *Ibis List*, p. 54; Fringilla flavirostris, *Seebohm*, ii. p. 111; Fringilla montium, *Pulteney's List*, p. 12.

The Twite is a winter visitant, and according to Pulteney, although "not common, sometimes observed in Dorset." Its appearance is somewhat irregular, but it may sometimes be found flocking with Linnets, amongst which birds it may be detected by its yellow bill (*flavirostris*) and its forked tail.

BULLFINCH. *Pyrrhula europœa*, Vieillot.

Yarrell, ii. p. 166; *Dresser*, iv. p. 101; *Ibis List*, p. 56; Pyrrhula vulgaris, *Harting*, p. 29; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 51; Loxia pyrrhula, *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

Resident, and generally distributed, the Bullfinch is usually seen in pairs; never gregarious, nor associating with other species.

FAM. LOXIIDÆ.

CROSSBILL. *Loxia curvirostra*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 187; *Harting*, p. 29; *Dresser*, iv. p. 127; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 30; *Ibis List*, p. 57; *Pulteney's List*, p. 11.

The Crossbill is a spring and autumn migrant, arriving irregularly in large flocks. Pulteney refers to it as not uncommon in his time, and it has been known to breed in the adjoining county of Hants,

in Holt Forest (Lewcock), and near Bournemouth (Dumville Lees, *Zoologist*, 1877, p. 254). In the spring of 1850, thirteen passed through the hands of Mr. Rolls, the bird-stuffer of Weymouth, all of which were procured in that neighbourhood. Professor Newton saw a small flock in Bere Wood in the middle of the summer of 1869. Several frequented the plantations of Binegar, near Wareham, from November 1874 to the following April (O. Farrer).

Fam. Sturnidæ.

STARLING. *Sturnus vulgaris*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 228; *Harting*, p. 30; *Dresser*, iv. p. 405; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 12; *Ibis List*, p. 65; *Pulteney's List*, p. 8.

Resident, and essentially gregarious, congregating in large flocks as soon as the breeding season is over. Towards evening large detachments may be seen hurrying to their common rendezvous, usually some copse or withy bed, when a deafening chatter ensues. The entire flock then rises, as if actuated by one impulse, and gradually settles down for the night in the selected roosting-place.

ROSE-COLOURED PASTOR. *Pastor roseus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 243; *Harting*, p. 30; *Dresser*, iv. p. 423; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 20; *Ibis List*, p. 66; Turdus roseus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 10.

The Rose-coloured Pastor is an irregular autumn visitor, those observed here being usually birds of

the year which have missed their course on migration. Pulteney notices one killed at Crichel, and another on the beach at Charmouth. Professor Newton saw a stuffed specimen in a farmhouse near Moreton, which had been killed in the neighbourhood. One shot at Portland is in the County Museum; and another, procured at Swanage, July 14, 1884, had frequented the place for some days before it was shot.

Fam. Corvidæ.

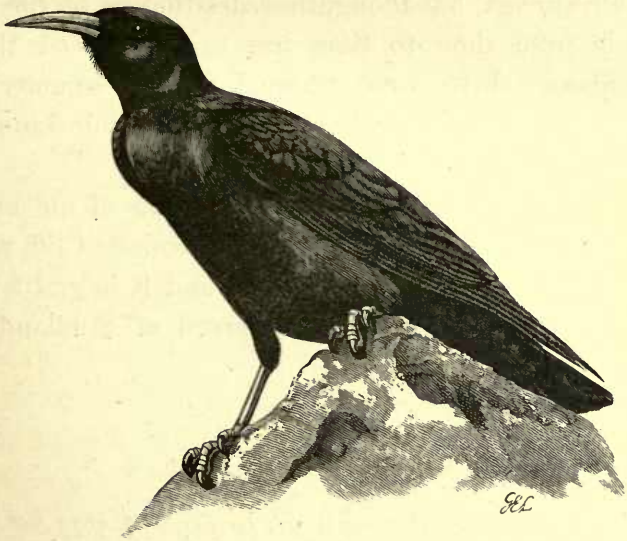
CHOUGH. *Pyrrhocorax graculus*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 252; *Harting*, p. 30; *Dresser*, iv. p. 437; *Seebohm*, i. p. 576; *Ibis List*, p. 66; Corvus graculus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

There is much reason to fear that in the county of Dorset this interesting bird is on the eve of extinction. Fifty years ago it used to be abundant on the Purbeck coast, but has gradually become scarcer, and is now quite a rare bird.

In 1865, on a visit to the Dorsetshire coast during the nesting season, Mr. Harting observed several pairs of Choughs in the cliffs near Lulworth, and found two nests containing eggs. In an interesting account which he has given of this excursion (*Zoologist*, 1865, pp. 9665–9678), he thus alludes to the present species:—"The Chough, when on the wing, if at too great a distance to distinguish the bill, may be readily known from the Jackdaw (the

only bird for which it could be mistaken) by its rounder wings and more measured flight; its note, too, is sharper and more distinct. Judging from the only two instances in which we were enabled to make any observation, the Chough selects for its breeding-place a crevice in a cliff some 80 or 100 feet below its summit, where the soil is crumbling



and the rock above impends. Generally the crevice extends inwards for some little distance, and perhaps turns to the right or left. On this account it is not only a difficult nest to find, unless the bird is seen from below to enter the crevice, but it is also one of the most difficult to take from its almost inaccessible position. The natural daring of the fishermen, however, further stimulated by the promise of a

reward, generally overcomes such difficulties. On two occasions when in a boat under the cliffs, a Chough passed within shot, but reflecting that we had already done enough to diminish the race by taking the eggs, our charge was saved, and the birds spared, haply to breed again."

Since that time a few pairs have maintained their footing in the range of sea-cliffs between Weymouth and Swanage, but thoughtless destruction of the old birds from time to time has sadly reduced their numbers. Five were trapped in the summer of 1885 near Swanage, where in the following January another was shot.

I had the pleasure of seeing a pair of old birds and one young one flying about Seacombe Cliff, near St. Alban's Head, in May 1885, and it is gratifying to add that a pair were observed at Studland as recently as April 1887.

RAVEN. *Corvus corax*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 259; *Harting*, p. 30; *Dresser*, iv. p. 567; *Seebohm*, i. p. 532; *Ibis List*, p. 70; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4.

The Raven is another bird which has become nearly extinct through persistent persecution. Fifty years ago it used to breed in the cliffs of St. Alban's Head and Gadcliff; several were often seen together soaring over the cliffs above Kimmeridge, with their ominous croak. In 1865 Mr. Harting noticed its occurrence near Lulworth, where there was a brood reared (in Swyre Cliff) in April of that year (*Zoologist*,

1865, p. 9669). A pair have frequented the Whatcombe Woods for the last two years, and I hope to hear of their breeding. A pair of these birds showed much precautionary skill in stealing the eggs of sea-fowl from the perpendicular cliffs of Ballard Down, near Swanage. While one stood as sentinel on a commanding eminence, the other swooped below, and after taking an egg, returned with it in its bill to its companion; both then flew off out of sight, and after a short interval returned to repeat the same tactics. This was observed several times in one afternoon.

CROW. *Corvus corone*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 274; *Harting*, p. 31; *Dresser*, iv. p. 531; *Seebohm*, i. p. 539; *Ibis List*, p. 69; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4.

The Crow is a resident, and holds its own with greater success than does the Raven. Possibly its resemblance to the Rook has helped to protect it from extermination. It is abundant in the Poole estuary, where many may be seen together at low tide, feeding along its margin.

HOODED CROW. *Corvus cornix*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 275; *Harting*, p. 31; *Dresser*, iv. p. 543; *Seebohm*, i. p. 544; *Ibis List*, p. 69; *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

A casual winter visitant, occasionally seen on the Poole estuary, where it is a more frequent visitor than in any other part of the county. One was shot,

at Abbotsbury, and another at Encombe, in December 1870; a third at Winterbourne Kingston, January 1881, by Mr. E. Besant; and a fourth on December 8, 1885, at the same place.

ROOK. *Corvus frugilegus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 289; *Harting*, p. 31; *Dresser*, iv. p. 551; *Seebohm*, i. p. 549; *Ibis List*, p. 70; *Pulteney's List*, p. 4.

The Rook is a common resident, extending its colonies far and wide. Thousands assemble among the lofty trees of Clenston and Oatclose Wood during the autumn and winter months. Large and small parties converge at eventide towards this centre from every direction of the compass, and after a short rest and apparent consultation in a neighbouring field or down, they fly off and join their companions for the night. The clamour of so great a multitude at this time is well-nigh inconceivable. They are up and about again at early morn, at which time their behaviour indicates the state of the weather for the ensuing day, for upon this depends the extent of their wanderings; if it is going to be fine, whatever may be the forecast, they move off, and are not seen again until the evening; if, on the contrary, it is going to be stormy, they do not go far away. The labourers, who always take an interest in the weather, and are usually very observant, say when they see the Rooks hanging about the neighbourhood, "'Twill be bad weather to-day, for the rooks do stay at home."

JACKDAW. *Corvus monedula*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 305; *Harting*, p. 31; *Dresser*, iv. p. 523; *Seebohm*, i. p. 556; *Ibis List*, p. 68; *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

Resident, and extremely numerous on our sea-cliffs, where, according to some authorities, its increase has operated to drive away the weaker and less combative Chough.

MAGPIE. *Pica rustica*, (Scopoli).

Yarrell, ii. p. 312; *Dresser*, iv. p. 509; *Ibis List*, p. 68; Pica caudata, *Harting*, p. 31; *Seebohm*, i. p. 562; Corvus pica, *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

A common resident, the Magpie is much persecuted by gamekeepers on account of its asserted partiality for young game and eggs. It breeds freely, however, under protection. On one occasion, in March 1884, I saw more than twenty together on the hills behind Shillingston.

JAY. *Garrulus glandarius*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 323; *Harting*, p. 32; *Dresser*, iv. p. 481; *Seebohm*, i. p. 569; *Ibis List*, p. 67; Corvus glandarius, *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

This brightly plumaged bird is a constant resident, and, like the rest of the *Corvidæ*, suffers constant persecution at the instance of game-preservers. Its attractive wing-feathers, moreover, are an additional cause of danger to it.

Fam. Hirundinidæ.

SWALLOW. *Hirundo rustica*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 340; *Harting*, p. 35; *Dresser*, iii. p. 477; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 171; *Ibis List*, p. 42: *Pulteney's List*, p. 12.

The Swallow is one of our best known and familiar summer visitants.

MARTIN. *Chelidon urbica*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 349; *Dresser*, iii. p. 495; *Ibis List*, p. 44; Hirundo urbica, *Harting*, p. 35; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 178; *Pulteney's List*, p. 13.

Like the last-named, a common summer visitor.

SAND-MARTIN. *Cotile riparia*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 355; *Dresser*, iii. p. 505; *Ibis List*, p. 44; Hirundo riparia, *Harting*, p. 35; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 184; *Pulteney's List*, p. 13.

A summer migrant, more local in its distribution than its congeners, and essentially gregarious, breeding in colonies. It leaves earlier than either the Swallow or the House-Martin.

ORDER PICARIÆ.

Fam. Cypselidæ.

SWIFT. *Cypselus apus*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 364; *Harting*, p. 35; *Dresser*, iv. p. 583; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 292; *Ibis List*, p. 74; Hirundo apus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 13.

A summer migrant, arriving later and leaving earlier than any of the *Hirundinidæ*.

Fam. Caprimulgidæ.

NIGHTJAR. *Caprimulgus europæus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 377; *Harting*, p. 35; *Dresser*, iv. p. 621; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 309; *Ibis List*, p. 75; *Pulteney's List*, p. 13.

The Nightjar is a summer visitant, arriving and leaving about the same time as the Swift, and breeding freely on our heath-lands; the female lays two eggs only, on the bare ground, with no pretensions to a nest. The gape of the mouth is furnished with stiff bristles, to facilitate, probably, the capture of prey, which is caught on the wing; the use of the pectinated middle claw is difficult to explain, and for this there are many theories. Gilbert White considered it to be a provision to enable the bird to secure beetles, on which he observed it preying. "The circumstance that pleased me most," he says,[1] "was that I saw it distinctly more than once put out its short leg when on the wing, and by a bend of the head deliver somewhat into its mouth." Wilson viewed it as "a comb to clean the bird of vermin;" Dillon thought "its chief use is to comb and dress the bristles;" Naumann, that "it might be the means of enabling the bird to hold more firmly when it alights upon a branch, upon which it has the peculiarity of sitting lengthwise, and not across it, like other birds." When disturbed in the daytime, the Nightjar will fly in an apparently uncertain, zigzag course to a neighbouring tree; and when

[1] Letter XXXVII. to Pennant.

flushed from its nest, it will, like many other birds when they have young, feign to be wounded or winged. When on the feed at dusk, it shows the greatest activity and power of wing, wheeling and skimming over the surface of a piece of water with the rapidity and gracefulness of a swallow. Owing to its owl-like aspect, it often falls a victim to the gamekeeper's gun. Pulteney states that it has been killed in Dorsetshire as late as October.

Fam. Cuculidæ.

CUCKOO. *Cuculus canorus*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 387 ; *Harting*, p. 34; *Dresser*, v. p. 199; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 378; *Ibis List*, p. 83; *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

The Cuckoo is a well-known summer visitant, arriving punctually almost to a day. With us it is Wareham Fair-day. I found a young Cuckoo in June 1886 occupying a Robin's nest at the foot of a gate-post, Robin's eggs lying outside on the ground. The gate was much in use at the time, passengers and waggons continually passing through. I once flushed a Cuckoo on the sea-coast in the month of November.

Fam. Upupidæ.

HOOPOE. *Upupa epops*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 419; *Harting*, p. 33; *Dresser*, v. p. 179; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 334; *Ibis List*, p. 83; *Pulteney's List*, p. 5.

The Hoopoe is an irregular summer visitant, and would be seen much oftener if allowed to remain and breed, which it doubtless would do, but its conspicuous plumage is fatal; for as soon as it appears, it attracts the attention of every thoughtless gunner. Pulteney says it has been seen at Shroton, Hanford, Cranborne Chace, Almer, Dorchester, and the neighbourhood of Wareham. Yarrell states that there were three Hoopoes in the collection of the Rev. Mr. Bailey (Bartlett?) at Swanage in 1827, all of which had been killed in the neighbourhood; two shot at Canford in 1839; two at Langton Maltravers in 1850. One seen at Kimmeridge in 1851, and escaped; one shot at Butterwick, Bishop's Caundle, 1854; and one at Buckland Newton, the same year, by Mr. W. D. Dugdale; one seen at Charmouth (Mr. F. Moore); two shot at Hemsworth Farm, Witchampton, April 1861; one picked up dead on Roger's Farm, Bere Regis, September 1876; one shot at Branksome Tower, Bournemouth, and another at Longfleet, Poole, 1878; one shot by Mr. Robert Lewis at Ash Farm, Stourpaine. There are records of its occurrence also at Hamworthy, Poole, Winfrith, Studland, and Radipole, near Weymouth. Mr. Harting states ("Our Summer Migrants," p.

251), that "according to the observations of Mr. Turner of Sherborne, Dorsetshire, the nest has been taken on three or four occasions by the schoolboys from pollard willows, on the banks of the river Lenthay, and that the birds were known to the boys as 'Hoops.'"

Fam. Coraciidæ.

ROLLER. *Coracias garrula*, L.

Yarrell, ii. 428; *Harting*, p. 34; *Dresser*, v. 141; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 329; *Ibis List*, p. 237.

So far as I am aware, there is only one ascertained instance of the occurrence of this rare bird in Dorsetshire. In 1868 one passed through Mr. Hart's hands, which had been shot in the neighbourhood of Dorchester.

Fam. Meropidæ.

BEE-EATER. *Merops apiaster*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 435; *Harting*, p. 34; *Dresser*, v. p. 155; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 321; *Ibis List*, p. 82.

Like the last named, the Bee-Eater is an irregular summer visitant. One said to have been shot at Chideock, Lyme Regis, is preserved in the Bridport Museum; another shot at Swanage is in the possession of Mr. White, stone merchant, of that place.

Fam. Alcedinidæ.

KINGFISHER. *Alcedo ispida*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 443; *Harting*, p. 34; *Dresser*, v. p. 113; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 341; *Ibis List*, p. 80; *Pulteney's List*, v. p. 6.

The Kingfisher is a resident, and generally distributed throughout the county. Notwithstanding its resplendent plumage, it continues to escape extermination, partly from its fecundity, and partly from the inaccessible position of its nest, which is frequently at some depth within the river-bank. A curious instance occurred in 1884 of the instinctive capacity displayed by a pair of Kingfishers in discovering fish which had been introduced in a locality far removed from their usual haunts, and so placed as to necessitate a considerable journey through woods and across downs. At the Down House, which stands about a hundred and twenty feet above the valley of the Stour, and a mile and a half distant from the river, the water supply being dependent upon a deep well, the owner, Sir William Marriot, remedied the deficiency by a "ram" erected on the Stour, which pumped up the water and conveyed it by underground pipes to the house. This not only satisfied the requirements of the establishment, but enabled him to have some ornamental waterworks and a fish-culture apparatus, from which the fry as soon as they were hatched were removed to a pond of no very large dimensions. It was to this pond the Kingfishers found their way, and committed great

havoc amongst the young fish. It is difficult to account for their presence at a spot so far removed from their natural haunts, unless we may assume that the new fish-pond was first discovered accidentally by the birds when passing over on migration between the valleys of the Stour and the Winterbourne. For it must be remembered that at the approach of winter a general migratory movement takes place, and the Kingfishers draw down towards the sea. In November 1884 three were killed at Peveril Point, Swanage, at the extreme end of the ledge.

Fam. Picidæ.

GREEN WOODPECKER. *Gecinus viridis*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 457; *Dresser*, v. p. 77: *Seebohm*, ii. p. 364; *Ibis List*, p. 79; Picus viridis, *Harting*, p. 32; *Pulteney's List*, p. 6.

The Green Woodpecker is a well-known resident in Dorsetshire, and abundant in the wooded districts of the county. Its cheery note, so far-resounding in early spring, I have heard as late as October 12.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER. *Dendrocopus major*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 470; *Ibis List*, p. 77; Picus major, *Harting*, p. 32; *Dresser*, v. p. 19; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 354; *Pulteney's List*, p. 6.

The Great Spotted Woodpecker, although a resident in Dorsetshire, is the rarest of all the *Picidæ*.

In November 1872 a young bird about three-quarters grown was shot in Clenston Wood; one was shot at Bloxworth by the Rev. O. P. Cambridge; another at Little Bridy by the Rev. A. E. Eaton; a third passed through the hands of Mr. Hart of Christchurch, which was shot at Shaftesbury; and a fourth was shot at Wareham in February 1866.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER. *Dendrocopus minor*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 477; *Ibis List*, p. 78; Picus minor, *Harting*, p. 32; *Dresser*, v. p. 53; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 359; *Pulteney's List*, p. 6.

The Lesser Spotted Woodpecker is also a resident, and generally distributed in suitable localities. A pair built a nest and reared a brood at Bridehead (Rev. A. E. Eaton). One in my collection was shot at Houghton, and I have a note of another shot at Long Bridy in May 1885.

MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER. *Dendrocopus medius*, (L.)

Ibis List, p. 78; Picus medius, *Harting*, p. 122; *Dresser*, v. p. 47; *Pulteney's List*, p. 6.

Although there is no satisfactory evidence of the occurrence in England of the Middle Spotted Woodpecker, for which the young of *D. major* has sometimes been mistaken, it is nevertheless included by Pulteney in his catalogue of the birds of Dorset.

DOWNY WOODPECKER. *Dendrocopus pubescens*, (L.)

Yarrell, ii. p. 485; *Ibis List*, p. 77; Picus pubescens, *Harting*, p. 122.

The Downy Woodpecker being a North American bird, common to the Eastern United States, it is difficult to account for its occurrence in Dorsetshire. The Rev. O. P. Cambridge, however, possesses one which was shot at Bloxworth in December 1836. (See *The Zoologist*, 1859, p. 6444.)

GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER. *Picus martius*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 482; *Harting*, p. 120; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 368; *Ibis List*, p. 76; *Pulteney's List*, p. 6; Dryocopus martius, *Dresser*, v. p. 3.

The Great Black Woodpecker is included here on the authority of Pulteney, who writes:—"Body black, cap scarlet. Shot in the Nursery Garden, Blandford; also at Whitchurch and other places in Dorset." Considering the wide geographical range of this bird, which inhabits the pine forests of Northern and Central Europe, and occurs also in Spain (*fide* Lord Lilford), there seems nothing improbable in its reported appearance in the British Islands; although recent authorities, notwithstanding the numerous records of its appearance and capture, demur to its claim to be regarded as an occasional visitant to this country.

WRYNECK. *Jynx torquilla*, L.

Yarrell, ii. p. 487; *Harting*, p. 33; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 372; *Ibis List*, p. 80; *Dresser*, v. p. 103.

The Wryneck is a well-known visitant in summer, when its singular cry may be heard frequently in woods and orchards. I have notes of specimens obtained from Clenston Wood, Puncknoll, Luke, and Whatcombe.

ORDER COLUMBÆ.

Fam. Columbidæ.

RINGDOVE or WOOD-PIGEON. *Columba palumbus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 1; *Harting*, p. 36; *Dresser*, vii. p. 3; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 396; *Ibis List*, p. 138; *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

The shelter afforded by extensive woods and plantations facilitates the increase of this species, which is a common resident.

STOCK-DOVE. *Columba œnas*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 8; *Harting*, p. 36; *Dresser*, vii. p. 23; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 401; *Ibis List*, p. 138; *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

The Stock-Dove is annually becoming more abundant, especially in the sandy parts bordering the Poole estuary, where it breeds in the rabbit burrows, and far enough within to require digging for.

Sometimes two pairs will occupy the same burrow. They also nest in the sea-cliffs, as satisfactorily ascertained by Mr. Harting (*Zoologist*, 1865, p. 9670; and *The Field*, 14th April 1866). In winter they may be seen in flocks, sometimes associating with the Wood-Pigeon.

ROCK-DOVE. *Columba livia*, Gmelin.

Yarrell, iii. p. 13; *Harting*, p. 36; *Dresser*, vii. p. 11; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 405; *Ibis List*, p. 139.

The Rock-Dove is reported to breed about Portland, Gadcliff, Whitenore, and St. Alban's Head, but is rare. According to Mr. W. Thompson of Weymouth, a pair bred in the fissure of a rock at Whitenore in June 1853, and a specimen in my collection was shot at Gadcliff, on the western side of Kimmeridge Bay.

In his account of a visit to the Dorsetshire coast in the nesting season (*Zoologist*, 1865, p. 9670), Mr. Harting thus refers to the Rock-Dove:—"Although I was assured that the Rock-Dove breeds on this coast, and that I should have little difficulty in obtaining both birds and eggs, the only pigeons which I saw were certainly not *Columba livia;* they were either *C. œnas* or a cross between this species and the wild domestic pigeon. They were all similar in colour, and very dark; but in every case I looked in vain for the white-tail coverts—a characteristic and distinguishing mark of *C. livia*. These dark-coloured pigeons breed in the cliffs,

and are known to the fishermen as 'Rock-Doves,' although they are not the true Rock-Dove, *C. livia*. I will not say that the true Rock-Dove does not occur here, but only that we did not see it between Weymouth and St. Alban's Head, although out every day from morning till night."

Mr. Harting subsequently procured and reared some young birds from the cliffs near Lulworth, which proved to be *Columba œnas*. His remarks on the subject will be found in *The Field* of April 14, 1866, p. 317. From this it would seem to be not unlikely that the birds reported by Mr. Thompson of Weymouth as breeding in the cliffs at Whitenore (the same range of cliffs) were also *Columba œnas* (or perhaps escaped "Blue-Rocks"), and not, as he supposed, *Columba livia*. It may be observed that in the Isle of Wight, according to Mr. A. G. More (Venables' "Guide to the Isle of Wight," p. 431), the Rock-Dove is stated to be "a rare winter visitor," which would hardly be the case if it bred commonly in the cliffs of Dorsetshire.

TURTLE-DOVE. *Turtur communis*, Selby.

Yarrell, iii. p. 21; *Ibis List*, p. 139; Turtur auritus, *Harting*, p. 37; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 411; Turtur vulgaris, *Dresser*, vii. p. 39; Columba turtur, *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

A summer visitant, arriving about the end of April, and leaving in September. Towards the end of the summer it may be seen on the stubbles in small flocks.

ORDER GALLINÆ.

Fam. Tetraonidæ.

BLACK GROUSE. *Tetrao tetrix*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 60; *Harting*, p. 38; *Dresser*, vii. p. 205; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 435; *Ibis List*, p. 145; *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

The Black Grouse is very local in Dorsetshire, and does not increase under the strictest preservation. This may be accounted for possibly by the absence of forests and large woods in the vicinity of our moorlands, to which they can retire on quitting the heather. It occurs only on the heaths which are preserved, as between Alderholt and Knighton, where a few broods are reared annually. I learn from Professor Newton that in 1872 there was a nest on Bloxworth Heath; and I have occasionally seen Black Grouse on Chamberlayne's and Hyde Heaths. A fine specimen in the collection of Mr. W. Penney was shot on the common, near Lake Clay Pits, Hamworthy, in November 1876. Mr. Radclyffe shot a hybrid between the Black Grouse and Pheasant, which is preserved in his collection at Hyde.

Fam. Phasianidæ.

PHEASANT. *Phasianus Colchicus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 91; *Harting*, p. 37; *Dresser*, vii. p. 85; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 445; *Ibis List*, p. 141; *Pulteney's List*, p. 6.

As a strictly preserved species, generally distributed and abundant throughout the county. I have in my collection a splendid hybrid between a Pheasant and a Dorking hen, one of two hatched in 1871 under the care of my keeper, W. Shave, at Houghton.

PARTRIDGE. *Perdix cinerea*, Latham.

Yarrell, iii. p. 105; *Harting*, p. 39; *Dresser*, vii. p. 131; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 452; *Ibis List*, p. 142; Tetrao perdix, *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

Resident and generally distributed; its numbers obviously increased by the protection afforded it by game-preservers generally throughout the county.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE. *Caccabis rufa*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 115; *Dresser*, vii. p. 103; *Ibis List*, p. 141; Perdix rufa, *Harting*, p. 40; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 457; Tetrao rufus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

Fortunately (as some people consider) the Red-legged Partridge has failed to attain a permanent footing in this county, occasional attempts to introduce it having proved unsuccessful. Pulteney notices a specimen shot at Upwey, near Weymouth,

and suggests the probability of its sometimes reaching this country from the Channel Islands. This, however, is very unlikely, as the Red-legged Partridge, although a wandering species, is not migratory. In some parts of the eastern counties it is said to have extirpated the Common Partridge, but this is contradicted by many good authorities. They are not only frequently found together in the same field, but the eggs of both species have occasionally been found in the same nest. A preference for running rather than flying renders it, in the eyes of many sportsmen, an inferior object of pursuit to the Grey Partridge when dogs are used; but in the now fashionable sport of "Partridge-driving" the red-legged bird is invaluable.

QUAIL. *Coturnix communis*, Bonnaterre.

Yarrell, iii. p. 123; *Dresser*, vii. p. 143; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 462; *Ibis List*, p. 143; Coturnix vulgaris, *Harting*, p. 40; Tetrao coturnix, *Pulteney's List*, p. 7.

The Quail is a summer migrant, arriving in April and leaving early in September. Some few remain during the winter, and I have seen them as late as January 1st. Several are annually found in the neighbourhood of Blandford, especially at Houghton and Milborne St. Andrew's. One was shot at Lulworth, September 12, 1882, three at Whatcombe in August 1882, a bevy was found at Milborne St. Andrew's in September 1884, and a single bird was shot there in October 1885.

ORDER FULICARIÆ.

Fam. Rallidæ.

CORNCRAKE or LANDRAIL. *Crex pratensis*, (Bechstein).

Yarrell, iii. p. 137; *Harting*, p. 57; *Dresser*, vii. p. 291; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 535; *Ibis List*, p. 149; Rallus crex, *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

A common summer visitant, whose harsh note is heard in the mowing grass and clover-fields soon after its arrival, which is usually during the first week of May. The nest, which is often cut out by the mowers, generally contains from eight to ten eggs, of a pale cream colour, blotched or spotted with reddish brown. One of its migratory routes in autumn lies in the direction of Swanage and the neighbourhood, where as many as thirty have been shot in one day in the early part of October.

SPOTTED CRAKE. *Porzana maruetta*, (Leach).

Yarrell, iii. p. 143; *Dresser*, vii. p. 267; *Ibis List*, p. 147; Crex porzana, *Harting*, p. 58; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 540.

A rare visitant on migration in spring and autumn. In other parts of England it has occasionally been observed during the winter. The authors of "The Birds of Cumberland" report the case of one which was constantly seen from the month of November

until it was shot in the following April near Penrith; but this, after all, might be an exceptional case. I have notes of one shot near Weymouth, November 5, 1852, and another near Wareham in September 1868. The late Mr. Thompson sent one alive to the Zoological Society's Gardens in the Regent's Park, which had been caught in a garden at Radipole. His son shot one at Lodmoor, near Weymouth, September 28, 1872; and one obtained in the neighbourhood of Blandford is in the collection of the Rev. J. Penny, Rector of Tarrant Rushton.

LITTLE CRAKE. *Porzana parva*, (Scopoli).

Yarrell, iii. p. 148; *Dresser*, vii. p. 283; *Ibis List*, p. 148; Crex pusilla, *Harting*, p. 58; Crex parva, *Seebohm*, ii. p. 547.

Two specimens of the Little Crake were shot in the neighbourhood of Alderholt Park (G. Churchill), and, so far as I am aware, this is the only instance known of its occurrence in this county.

WATER-RAIL. *Rallus aquaticus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 159; *Harting*, p. 57; *Dresser*, vii. p. 257; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 552; *Ibis List*, p. 146; *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

The Water-Rail is resident, and not unfrequent in suitable places. It often escapes observation owing to its extreme shyness and skulking habits, never making use of its wings unless closely pressed. I have notes of its occurrence at Kimmeridge, Bere Regis, and Lodmoor, near Weymouth.

MOORHEN. *Gallinula chloropus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 164; *Harting*, p. 58; *Dresser*, vii. p. 313; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 557; *Ibis List*, p. 151; Fulica chloropus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 16.

Resident, and generally distributed in ponds and streams throughout the county.

COOT. *Fulica atra*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 171; *Harting*, p. 58; *Dresser*, vii. p. 327; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 564; *Ibis List*, p. 151; *Pulteney's List*, p. 16.

The Coot is more local in its distribution than the Moorhen, and more gregarious, frequenting only the larger pools, rivers, and estuaries. During the winter months it may be seen in flocks at Abbotsbury, Poole estuary, Littlesea, Morden Park, and Crichel.

ORDER ALECTORIDES.

Fam. Gruidæ.

CRANE. *Grus communis*, Bechstein.

Yarrell, iii. p. 178; *Dresser*, vii. p. 337; *Ibis List*, p. 152; Grus cinerea, *Harting*, p. 54; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 570.

Although at one time a resident in the British Islands, breeding in the fenlands, the Crane is now only an accidental visitor to this country; and as

regards Dorsetshire, it can only be included in our catalogue as a rare straggler. Stokes, the Poole gunner, shot one at Poole, November 12, 1839, and another in 1849. A third, shot on the banks of the Wareham river in May 1869, is in the possession of Mr. H. Panton of Wareham. These are the only three instances of its occurrence in this county of which I have any note.

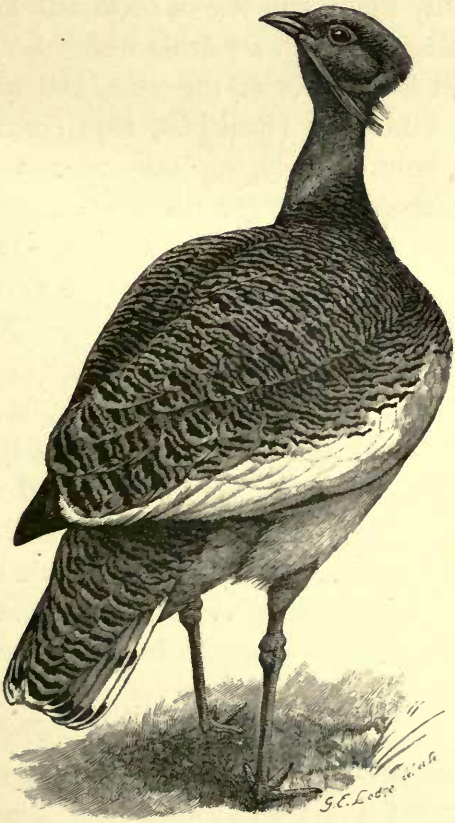
FAM. OTIDIDÆ.

GREAT BUSTARD. *Otis tarda*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 193; *Harting*, p. 41; *Dresser*, viii. p. 369; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 581; *Ibis List*, p. 153; *Pulteney's List*, p. 6.

The Great Bustard, like the Crane, was also a resident at no very remote period in Great Britain. Pulteney, writing in 1813, says:—"The Bustard is now becoming very scarce even in Wiltshire; a few stragglers make their appearance now and then about Woodyates and Ashmore Downs; single birds have been killed in Langton parish, in Studland, and elsewhere." The late Sir William Oglander is said to have shot three on the same day. The Rev. W. Chafin, in the second edition of his "Anecdotes of Cranbourn Chace," published in 1818, thus refers to his meeting with a flock of Bustards in 1751:—"I was shooting Dotterels near Winterslow Hut, when the report of my gun disturbed twenty-five Bustards, which flew away quietly over the hill called Southern

Hill. I followed them on horseback, and came upon them nearly within shot. As they rose, the noise of their wings frightened my horse, which I was leading; he started back, threw me down, and ran away. As



soon as I got upon my knees, I fired at the birds, but they had got out of range. I saw one separate itself from the rest, and alight on the side of the opposite hill and spread out its wings as if wounded, but

before I could come within shot, it took flight and followed the line of its companions." He adds, "I believe such a number of Bustards will never again be seen in England together.[1] On January 23, 1871, three Bustards appeared near Maddington, a village on Salisbury Plain, and one of them was killed by a bird-keeping boy with a marble which he happened to have in his pocket at the time, and with which he charged his gun (*Zoologist*, 1871, p. 2477). A few days later, namely, on January 26th, the two survivors were seen near the adjoining village of Berwick St. James, and one of them, a male, was shot with a bullet (*Zoologist*, 1871, p. 2510). It is preserved in the Salisbury Museum. Nearly ten years later, namely, on January 1, 1880, a hen Bustard weighing nine pounds was shot by Mr. W. Hibberd in a turnip-field at Handley, near Woodyates Inn, and was sent for preservation to Mr. Hart of Christchurch (*Zoologist*, 1880, p. 110). This is the Dorsetshire specimen referred to in the fourth edition of Yarrell's "British Birds," vol. iii. p. 208.

LITTLE BUSTARD. *Otis tetrax*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 216; *Harting*, p. 42; *Dresser*, vii. p. 383; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 587; *Ibis List*, p. 154.

The Little Bustard is an occasional winter visitant. More than forty instances of its occurrence in England were known to Mr. Harting when he

[1] The original account is somewhat diffuse, and accordingly is here abridged.

published his "Handbook of British Birds" in 1872. In Dorsetshire, however, it must be a very rare bird, for I have not heard of more than one instance of its occurrence in the county. This was a hen bird in my collection, shot December 26, 1853, on Fossil Common, Winfrith.

ORDER LIMICOLÆ.

Fam. Œdicnemidæ.

STONE-CURLEW. *Œdicnemus crepitans*, Tem.

Œ. scolopax (Gmelin), *Yarrell*, iii. p. 225; *Dresser*, vii. p. 401; *Ibis List*, p. 155; Œdicnemus crepitans, *Harting*, p. 42; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 596; Charadrius œdicnemus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 16.

The Stone-Curlew or Thick-Knee is a summer visitant, usually frequenting the chalk uplands of the county. Its eggs are not unfrequently found on the winter fallows, where many are unfortunately destroyed by the practice of rolling the wheat in spring. This fate attended two nests at Pimperne in the spring of 1885. A chick was brought to me alive in July 1873, which I caused to be restored to the field from which it was taken, and not too late, as I hoped, to be recovered by the parents. I have notes of this species being shot on their autumn migration at Bingham's Melcombe, at Kimmeridge, and near Encombe; Pulteney especially refers to

Monkton Down, near Blandford, as a haunt of this species. In the autumn of 1886 as many as thirteen were seen together in a turnip-field at Whitchurch. A specimen in the collection of Mr. W. Penney was shot on the Sandbanks in Poole Harbour on the 10th December 1873. The occurrence of this bird here in winter recalls the statement of Rodd ("Birds of Cornwall," p. 83), to the effect that it is known in Cornwall *only as a winter visitant*, that county being regarded as the northern boundary of the area occupied by this species in its winter quarters. The Rev. Murray A. Mathew testifies to its occasional occurrence in winter in Devonshire, and Mr. A. G. More says the same of the Isle of Wight (Venables' "Guide to the Isle of Wight," p. 431).

Fam. Glareolidæ.

COLLARED PRATINCOLE. *Glareola pratincola*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 231; *Harting*, p. 133; *Dresser*, vii. p. 411; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 69; *Ibis List*, p. 155.

The Collared Pratincole is a rare summer visitant. Mr. Harting, in his "Handbook of British Birds,"[1] enumerates twenty instances of its occurrence in the British Islands. One in the Bryanston collection was shot on the banks of the Stour, during a severe winter when the river was frozen over; a second was seen on the eastern side of the county in the

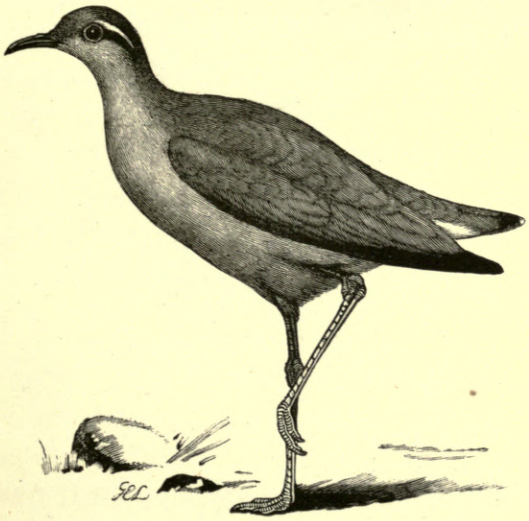
[1] See also J. H. Gurney, jun., *Zoologist*, 1869, p. 1612.

direction of Christchurch (J. C. Dale); and a third was seen by the late Mr. W. Thompson in November 1855, flying over the Weymouth Backwater.

Fam. Charadriidæ.

CREAM-COLOURED COURSER. *Cursorius gallicus* (Gmelin).

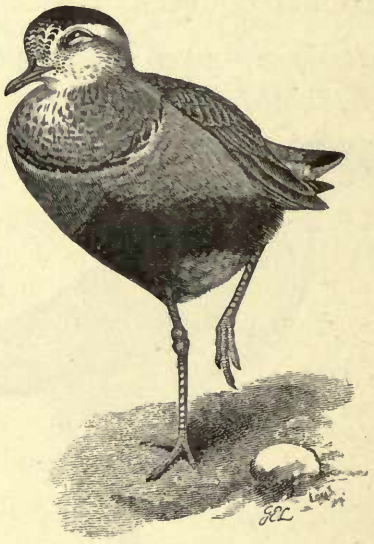
Yarrell, iii. p. 238; *Harting*, p. 131; *Dresser*, vii. p. 425; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 63; *Ibis List*, p. 156.



The Cream-coloured Courser is a rare and accidental straggler. The present Lord Digby, when following the hounds in the year 1853, observed one on Batcombe Down, and the next day the Earl of Ilchester sent his keeper Walton, who found and shot it. It is now preserved in the Melbury collection.

DOTTEREL. *Eudromias morinellus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 246; *Harting*, p. 43; *Dresser*, vii. p. 507; *Ibis List*, p. 160; Charadrius morinellus, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 30; *Pulteney's List*, p. 16; *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. and Antiq. Field Club*, vol. vi. p. 29.



The Dotterel is a spring and autumn visitant, and is partial to dry cultivated soils. Dorsetshire is not directly in its line of migration, and consequently the bird rarely visits us. One was shot near Pimperne, and another on Pimperne Down (Pulteney). Three were shot on Waterson Ridge by the late Mr. James Harding in the early spring of 1843, during some very cold weather; one was shot on the western side of Milborne St. Andrew's farm, in a turnip-

field, in June 1853, and three were shot in 1884 at Bradford Abbas (Prof. Buckman). Two in the collection of Mr. Weld were shot near Lulworth, September 3, 1876.

RINGED PLOVER. *Ægialitis hiaticula*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 257; *Harting*, p. 44; *Dresser*, vii. p. 497; *Ibis List*, p. 159; Charadrius hiaticula, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 20; *Pulteney's List*, p. 16.

Resident, and generally distributed along the coast. It is a social bird, and keeps together in small flocks. Its musical note may be heard as it is flying across the sea, or running at the edge of the water. It breeds in numbers on the Chesil Bank, as well as on the sandbanks of Poole and Studland. A pair or two always nest close to the Haven Hotel at the mouth of the harbour, and rear two broods in the year (T. M. Pike).

Note.—The Kentish Plover, *Ægialitis cantiana*, has not been identified with certainty in this county, but as it has been found occasionally both in Hants and Devon, there can be little doubt that it also visits Dorsetshire.

GOLDEN PLOVER. *Charadrius pluvialis*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 271; *Harting*, p. 42; *Dresser*, vii. p. 435; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 35; *Ibis List*, p. 157; *Pulteney's List*, p. 16.

There is no recent evidence of this bird breeding in the county, although Pulteney asserts that it is

said to breed every year on Charlton Down, a part which has been so much frequented by them as to acquire the name of Plover Hole Bottom. Small flocks visit our downs during the winter and early spring, when their cheery notes may be often heard as they wheel round or pass overhead with lightning speed. During hard frost or when snow is on the ground, the Poole estuary is a favourite resort. I have one in my collection in nearly full summer plumage, which was shot by Mr. T. Keynes at Winterbourne Kingston late in the spring of 1881.

GREY PLOVER. *Squatarola helvetica*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 278; *Harting*, p. 43; *Dresser*, vii. p. 455; *Ibis List*, p. 158; Charadrius helveticus, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 44.

The Grey Plover is a spring and autumn visitant, and is seen inland much less frequently than the Golden Plover, preferring the estuaries and mud-flats. It regularly visits Poole harbour at the period of its migrations, being commoner in autumn than in spring, and a few are met with on the coast sometimes in winter. Two were shot at Weymouth in November and December 1850, when there were a good many at Lodmoor; two in summer plumage were procured at Poole in 1859; two at Lodmoor in May 1867; and one at the same place in May 1872 (W. Thompson). The young birds of the year, which have yellow spots on the back like the Golden Plover, may be distinguished by the black axillaries, and by the presence of a hind-toe.

LAPWING OR PEEWIT. *Vanellus vulgaris*, Bechstein.

Yarrell, iii. p. 283; *Dresser*, vii. p. 545; *Ibis List*, p. 161; Vanellus cristatus, *Harting*, p. 43; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 57; Tringa Vanellus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

A well-known and common resident, congregating in flocks at the end of the nesting season, when numbers leave the higher grounds where they breed, and go down to the mud-flats of the harbours and estuaries.

TURNSTONE. *Strepsilas interpres*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 289; *Harting*, p. 44; *Dresser*, vii. p. 555; *Ibis List*, p. 161; Charadrius interpres, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 12; Tringa interpres, *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

The Turnstone visits our coasts in spring and autumn, when migrating to and from its breeding haunts in Greenland, Iceland, and the shores and islands of Scandinavia. Mr. T. M. Pike informs me that it has been seen here during every month in the year, but that it is rare in winter. Several small flocks were seen at Poole, Studland, Kimmeridge Bay, and the neighbourhood of Weymouth in the severe spring of 1873. On June 8, 1875, Mr. Pike saw a pair on Drift Point, at the mouth of Poole harbour. One in my collection was knocked down by a stone thrown by a quarryman in Kimmeridge Bay in the autumn of 1881. The local name of this bird is Variegated or Chicken Plover.

OYSTER-CATCHER. *Hæmatopus ostralegus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 294; *Harting*, p. 45; *Dresser*, vii. p. 567; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 4; *Ibis List*, p. 162; *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

The Oyster-Catcher is frequently seen in the autumn, and at that season is generally distributed along the coast. A few pairs breed on the sandy portions of the Poole estuary, Weymouth, Worbarrow, and Studland. Should any approach be made towards the nest or newly hatched young, the parents with plaintive cries fly round and round overhead and endeavour to distract attention, very much as the Peewit does under similar circumstances.

FAM. SCOLOPACIDÆ.

AVOCET. *Recurvirostra avocetta*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 299; *Harting*, p. 46; *Dresser*, vii. p. 577; *Ibis List*, p. 162; Himantopus avocetta, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 74.

Although seventy years ago the Avocet used to breed in Lincolnshire and Norfolk, drainage of the marshes and persecution by gunners and egg-gatherers have driven it away, and it can now be only regarded as a rare visitor in spring and autumn. Pulteney includes it in his list "as sometimes seen on the shores of the county in the winter." Probably late autumn was intended. As stated by Yarrell, the Avocet has been noticed several times in Dorsetshire. One was killed by Captain Pretor near

the Portland Ferry-bridge in October 1867, and another was shot by Mr. W. Thompson the following month at Lodmoor; a third was obtained at Poole in 1869. Mr. T. M. Pike informs me that he once saw one on the wing close to Patchin's Point, a well-known resort of waders jutting out from the Arne peninsula.

BLACK-WINGED STILT. *Himantopus candidus*, Bonnaterre.

Yarrell, iii. p. 305; *Harting*, p. 135; *Dresser*, vii. p. 587; *Ibis List*, p. 163; Himantopus melanopterus, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 79; Charadrius himantopus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 16.

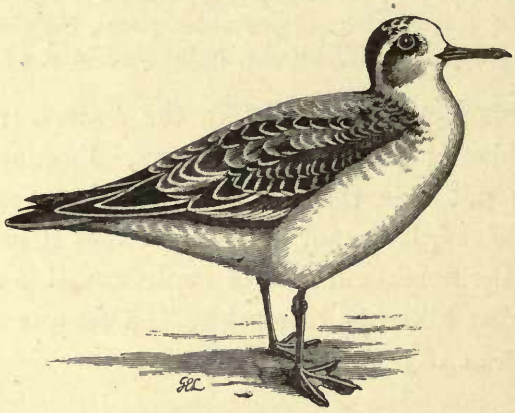
The Black-winged Stilt, like the Avocet, is a rare and accidental visitant on migration. Pulteney says, "I have not seen the bird, but from the accounts I have received, it cannot be doubted that it has been seen in the neighbourhood of Poole, and it is certain that it was killed in Hampshire." One was shot at Lodmoor in 1837 (W. Thompson).

GREY PHALAROPE. *Phalaropus fulicarius*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 310; *Harting*, p. 50; *Dresser*, vii. p. 605; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 85; *Ibis List*, p. 164; Tringa lobata, *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

The Grey Phalarope is an occasional winter visitor to our coast. Pulteney notices one which was shot on the Stour near Blandford in the year 1774, eleven years after it had been first described as a British bird. At the period of the autumnal migration this little bird is sometimes very common. In the autumn

of 1847 and 1849, for example, a considerable number of Grey Phalaropes appeared, and in the spring of 1849 one *in summer plumage* (rarely obtained in England) was shot by the Rev. C. Torkington at Weymouth Breakwater. It is curious, as remarked by Mr. Harting, that although the Grey Phalarope is sometimes quite numerous in the eastern and southern counties of England, at the period of its autumnal migration (at which season it has assumed



the winter plumage), it is very rarely met with here in spring in the very different plumage of the breeding season; indicating that on its return northwards to its breeding haunts in spring it adopts a route which does not take the main body of the migrating birds through the British Islands, as is the case in autumn. An extraordinary visitation of this species occurred in the autumn of 1866, chiefly on the south and south-east coasts of England, between August 20th

and October 8th, and a great many were met with in Dorsetshire. Mr. J. H. Gurney, jun., in a pamphlet which he published in the spring of 1867, has summarised the occurrences which were reported, and referring to Dorsetshire, he says (p. 17): "In the county of Dorset I am able to record nineteen at Weymouth, viz., a dozen set up by Mr. Rolls, who declares a hundred must have been brought to his door. There were also some shot at Abbotsbury, where two were observed swimming in a ditch within a hundred yards of a much-frequented road. Two of those stuffed by Mr. Rolls were killed on the 19th September by Mr. S. A. Pretor, and two others in addition were brought in on the 21st, on which day a gunner offered Mr. Thompson of Weymouth five for sale. One at Piddle Trenthide Manor-house on September 20th, was recorded by Rev. C. Bingham at the time in *Science Gossip*. On September 24th in that year, a Grey Phalarope was obtained at Wareham, on the property of Mr. Edward Weld, who wrote me word that about the same time he flushed one in a turnip-field. In addition to these, one was shot by a shepherd at Whatcombe; two by the keeper of Herringston Manor; one at Dorchester; one at Portland (September 24th); and lastly, one at Bridport, which was caught alive by the children of the Rev. Melville Lee in a field between that place and the harbour. In January 1873 one was shot near the Portland Ferry-bridge by Captain Pretor, and several have been seen in Kimmeridge Bay at various times. In the autumn of 1876 Mr. T. M.

Pike shot two just outside the Wareham River, swimming in shallow water. He considers this bird to be an annual visitor in autumn. A correspondent writing in the *Field* of October 24, 1885, states that he killed two Grey Phalaropes at Wareham not long before, and was much surprised at their extraordinary fearlessness. It was with the greatest difficulty he could get them to rise when swimming on some shallow water about twenty yards from him. One in the County Museum was killed at Glanville's Wootton, sixteen miles from the sea (J. C. Dale).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE. *Phalaropus hyperboreus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 315; *Harting*, p. 50; *Dresser*, vii. p. 597; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 89; *Ibis List*, p. 164.

In Dorsetshire the Red-necked Phalarope is of much rarer occurrence than the grey species, which is rather curious, for the former breeds annually in parts of Scotland and the Isles, and the latter does not. On one occasion at least, namely, in the autumn of 1847, the two species were found in company, when two Red-necked Phalaropes were killed at Lodmoor, near Weymouth, out of a flock of Grey Phalaropes consisting of several hundred birds (W. Thompson). It is not unlikely that in the autumn of 1866, when so many Grey Phalaropes were met with, there may have been some of the present species among them, escaping notice from the similarity of the winter plumage.

WOODCOCK. *Scolopax rusticula*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 320; *Harting*, p. 50; *Dresser*, vii. p. 615; *Seebohm*, iii. 231; *Ibis List*, p. 165; *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

The Woodcock is a regular winter visitant, a few pairs annually remaining to breed in favourable localities. A nest with four eggs was found in Clenston Wood in May 1869. The singular habit which this bird has of transporting its unfledged young to and from its feeding-ground is now well ascertained. See Mr. Harting's account of this interesting fact in *The Zoologist*, 1879, p. 483, with a most characteristic illustration by Joseph Wolf.

GREAT SNIPE. *Gallinago major*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iii. p. 336; *Harting*, p. 51; *Dresser*, vii. p. 631; *Ibis List*, p. 165; Scolopax major, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 237; *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

The Great Snipe is a rare and accidental visitant in autumn, when on migration from its northern breeding haunts to the Mediterranean and Africa, where it winters. Pulteney expresses some uncertainty about its occurrence in his time in Dorsetshire, but states that one was shot on the Dorset side of the Avon in the winter of 1793. A manuscript entry in Mr. Dale's copy of "Pulteney's List," in his handwriting, runs thus: "I have seen two or three Great or Solitary Snipes in Ilsington Wood." One was shot at Duntishe Common, Buckland Newton (Captain Stuart Carr Glyn), one near Binegar Hall,

Wareham, October 11, 1880 (Mr. Oliver Farrer), one at Worgret Farm (Mr. H. Garland), and one near Wool, October 12, 1885 (Mr. Eustace Radclyffe).

COMMON SNIPE. *Gallinago cœlestis* (Frenzel).

Yarrell, iii. p. 342; *Dresser*, vii. p. 641; *Ibis List*, p. 166; Gallinago media, *Harting*, p. 51; Scolopax gallinago, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 241; *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

A winter visitant, many remaining on our moors and heaths to breed. The "drumming" of the male bird may be heard throughout the summer in the breeding districts as it flies round at a good height, every now and then descending obliquely with a rapid vibration of wing and outspread tail-feathers. There is much difference of opinion amongst ornithologists as to how the sound is produced. The question has been fully discussed by Mr. Harting in his "Essays on Sport and Natural History," pp. 285–294. He considers the sound to be without doubt produced by a vibration of the primary feathers of the wings, a conclusion in which he is supported by such good authorities as Sir William Jardine, Mr. John Hancock, and the late Dr. Saxby. I once saw a Common Snipe, after flying about for some time in its usual way, perch upon the highest branch of an ash tree, which, being destitute of leaves, afforded me a good opportunity of observing the bird with my binoculars. After disturbing it from its lofty position, it resumed its usual habit by pitching down on the adjoining moor. The so-called

"Sabine's Snipe" (*Scolopax sabini*, Vigors), of which numerous specimens have been obtained from time to time in Dorsetshire, chiefly about Poole and in the valley of the Frome, between Wareham and Dorchester, is now generally regarded as a variety approaching to melanism of the Common Snipe. Mr. T. M. Pike shot one at the mouth of the Frome River in August 1868. During the past summer (1887) I flushed one of these birds twice in a meadow adjoining the river between Chamberlayne's and Hyde. Its flight was slow and somewhat heavy in comparison with the usual flight of the Snipe, doubtless because it was a young bird, like the majority of specimens obtained.

JACK-SNIPE. *Gallinago gallinula*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 351; *Harting*, p. 52; *Dresser*, vii. p. 653; Scolopax gallinula, *Seebohm*, ii. p. 247; *Pulteney's List*, p. 14; Limnocryptes gallinula, *Ibis List*, p. 167.

A regular winter visitant, but, unlike the Common Snipe, never remains to breed.

DUNLIN. *Tringa alpina*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 377; *Harting*, p. 49; *Dresser*, viii. p. 21; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 184; *Ibis List*, p. 169; *Pulteney's List*, p. 15; Tringa cinclus (winter plumage), *Ibid.*, p. 15.

The Dunlin is a very common spring and autumn visitant. It is especially abundant in the Poole estuary, and found everywhere round the coast, in

every bay and inlet. Often seen in company with the Ringed Plover. Although there is no proof of its breeding in Dorsetshire, the late Mr. W. Thompson, of Weymouth, thought it did so on the Chesil Bank; but this is extremely doubtful. Pulteney followed Linnæus, Pennant, and Montagu in considering the winter and summer plumage of the Dunlin to indicate a distinct species, calling the bird in its latter dress *Tringa cinclus*, the Purre.

LITTLE STINT. *Tringa minuta*, Leisler.

Yarrell, iii. p. 386; *Harting*, p. 49; *Dresser*, viii. p. 29; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 204; *Ibis List*, p. 169.

Like the last named, the Little Stint is a spring and autumn migrant. At the latter season it is occasionally seen in company with Dunlins and Sanderlings, whose habits are very similar. It is not uncommon in the neighbourhood of Weymouth and in the Poole estuary, also on the sandy portions of the coast. It is seldom seen in large flocks, but Mr. T. M. Pike once killed eight at a shot out of a flock of about thirty at Poole. Messrs. Seebohm and Harvie Browne discovered one of its breeding haunts on an island at the mouth of the Petchora, Western Siberia, July 22, 1873, until which date no authenticated egg of this bird had been procured. All honour to these enterprising ornithologists.

The distinguishing characters of this species and the next have been clearly pointed out by Mr. Harting in his "Birds of Middlesex," p. 199.

TEMMINCK'S STINT. *Tringa temmincki*, (Leisler).

Yarrell, iii. p. 398; *Harting*, p. 29; *Dresser*, viii. p. 45; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 217; *Ibis List*, p. 169.

A spring and autumn visitant, but by no means common. One was shot at Weymouth, September 2, 1872, by Mr. J. Thompson.

CURLEW SANDPIPER. *Tringa subarquata*, (Güldenstadt).

Yarrell, iii. p. 403; *Harting*, p. 48; *Dresser*, viii. p. 59; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 180; *Ibis List*, p. 170.

The Curlew Sandpiper is not an infrequent visitor in spring and autumn. Mr. T. M. Pike, who has shot several in Poole harbour, is of opinion that it is a much commoner bird than is generally supposed, and that it often passes unnoticed amongst the flocks of Dunlins with which it associates. It stands higher on the legs than the Dunlin, has a longer and more curved bill, and when flying may be distinguished by the white upper tail-coverts. I have notes of two shot in Kimmeridge Bay; one at Weymouth the same year (1873) in a plumage intermediate between summer and winter; one at the same place the following year by Mr. Turner; one at Weymouth Backwater, the breast and under parts dark chestnut with very little white; six procured at one shot in Poole harbour in 1880; two seen in Kimmeridge Bay in 1880; and one shot in summer plumage in August 1886 (E. Hart).

PURPLE SANDPIPER. *Tringa maritima*, Brün.

Tringa striata, *Yarrell*, iii. p. 408; *Dresser*, viii. p. 69; *Ibis List*, p. 171; Tringa maritima, *Harting*, p. 48; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 192.

The Purple Sandpiper is a winter visitant, and is more frequently met with on the rocky parts of the coast. One in my collection was shot in Kimmeridge Bay in December 1871; another was procured at Lyme Regis in 1881. In Poole harbour a good many were seen in 1886; but Mr. T. M. Pike, who, as a wild-fowl shooter, is so well acquainted with the place, considers this unusual. Several have been shot at Weymouth between the months of August and November (W. Thompson).

KNOT. *Tringa canutus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 413; *Harting*, p. 48; *Dresser*, viii. p. 77; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 174; *Ibis List*, p. 171; *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

The Knot is a spring and autumn visitant, a few occasionally remaining throughout the winter. Pulteney refers to one shot in the neighbourhood of Weymouth in the spring of 1795, and thirteen were seen at Verwood, Cranborne, November 10, 1844 (W. Thompson); two shot at Poole, April 1859, and one in summer plumage, May 1883 (E. Hart); two killed near Weymouth, January 4, 1871; two in December of the same year, and two in the County Museum collection were obtained at Preston, Weymouth, in May 1867.

SANDERLING. *Calidris arenaria*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 420; *Harting*, p. 49; *Dresser*, viii. p. 101; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 221; *Ibis List*, p. 172; Charadrius calidris, *Pulteney's List*, p. 16.

The Sanderling may be distinguished from every other Sandpiper which visits our shores by its short bill, and by the absence of a hind-toe, in which peculiarity it resembles the Plovers. It is a spring and autumn migrant, remaining occasionally during the winter. One in my collection was shot in Kimmeridge Bay in the winter of 1860. It is usually very common in autumn on the Poole sandbanks and in the neighbourhood of Weymouth.

RUFF and REEVE. *Machetes pugnax*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 426; *Harting*, p. 48; *Dresser*, viii. p. 87; *Ibis List*, p. 17; Totanus pugnax, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 113.

This remarkable bird, the only species of Sandpiper in which the sexes differ conspicuously in size and plumage, is with us a spring and autumn visitant, though oftener seen at the latter season. I have notes of a Reeve shot at Poole in 1840, and a Ruff in winter plumage in November of the same year; occasionally killed at Weymouth and the neighbourhood; several in the year 1848; a young Ruff shot in the Roke water-meadows, Bere Regis, September 1866; a Reeve shot at Poole 1869; a Ruff in full plumage, August 15, 1872; a young Ruff caught in a trap in a water-meadow at Mil-

borne St. Andrew's, December 20, 1878. Mr. T. M. Pike informs me that when living at Wareham he used occasionally to see a few of these birds in autumn on the reed-beds at the mouth of the Frome.

COMMON SANDPIPER. *Totanus hypoleucus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 446; *Dresser*, viii. p. 143; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 117; Tringoides hypoleucus, *Harting*, p. 48; *Ibis List*, p. 173; Tringa hypoleucos, *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

The Common Sandpiper, generally known as "Summer Snipe," is a summer visitant, arriving towards the end of April, and is generally distributed. It is very abundant in the Poole and Weymouth estuaries, as also along the shores at Portland; but direct evidence of its nesting in Dorsetshire is wanting.

GREEN SANDPIPER. *Totanus ochropus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 457; *Harting*, p. 47; *Dresser*, viii. p. 135; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 126; Helodromas ochropus, *Ibis List*, p. 174; Tringa ochropus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 15.

The Green Sandpiper is a spring and autumn visitant, oftener seen on its autumn migration. It frequents the banks of all our rivers and streams. I have met with it in several parts of the county. One in my collection was killed at Kimmeridge, and another, an immature bird, was shot by Colonel Hamboro at Bere Regis, August 15, 1881. In September as many as half a dozen might be seen together at

the top of the Wareham estuary, frequenting the muddy ditches just inside the sea-wall, but very wary and difficult to approach.

WOOD SANDPIPER. *Totanus glareola*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iii. p. 463; *Harting*, p. 47; *Dresser*, viii. p. 143; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 132; *Ibis List*, p. 175.

The Wood Sandpiper, like the last-named bird, is a spring and autumn visitant, but much less commonly met with. Dorsetshire is not in the line of its migration to the Mediterranean, where I have seen it in the winter. Three were killed at Lodmoor near Weymouth, August 19, 1867 (W. Thompson), and one at Kimmeridge in October 1868.

REDSHANK. *Totanus calidris*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 469; *Harting*, p. 46; *Dresser*, viii. p. 157; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 140; *Ibis List*, p. 176; Scolopax calidris, *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

This is one of our commonest wading birds, and is resident all the year, frequenting the coast and estuaries, and during the summer the river-banks and marshes. It is abundant at Poole harbour, Littlesea, Studland, and the neighbourhood of Weymouth. Mr. T. M. Pike writes:—"The Redshank has taken to breeding here for the last three or four years, more particularly at the back of Littlesea. I fancy this is a new departure. I never found them nesting here in former years."

SPOTTED REDSHANK. *Totanus fuscus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 474; *Harting*, p. 46; *Dresser*, viii. p. 165; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 145; *Ibis List*, p. 176.

The Spotted or Dusky Redshank is a rare spring and autumn visitant. One was shot at Weymouth, September 7, 1853, and one at Lodmoor, September 1, 1856 (W. Thompson); a third was shot by Mr. T. M. Pike at the junction of the Wareham river with the Poole estuary, September 8, 1877.

GREENSHANK. *Totanus canescens*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iii. p. 483; *Dresser*, viii. p. 173; *Ibis List*, p. 177; Totanus glottis, *Harting*, p. 46; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 149.

The Greenshank is a spring and autumn visitant, and is occasionally found inland, but is never so common as the Redshank. It has been met with in the neighbourhood of Weymouth and Poole; but at the latter place Mr. Pike considers it "rather rare, occurring in autumn, but never in any numbers." One was killed at Lytchett Maltravers in the autumn of 1872.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT. *Limosa melanura*, Leisler.

Limosa ægocephala, *Yarrell*, iii. p. 488; *Dresser*, viii. p. 211; *Ibis List*, p. 178; Totanus melanurus, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 162; Scolopax lapponica, *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

The Black-tailed Godwit in this county is a very uncommon visitant in spring and autumn. Pulteney

writes :—"This rare bird appears only now and then in England;[1] one was shot in Dorsetshire, and the specimen was in the collection of Marmaduke Tunstall (*Trans. Linn. Soc.*, vol. i. p. 128);" two killed at one shot on Cosmore Common, Revel's Inn (more than twenty miles inland), March 1827 (J. C. Dale); one shot at Wareham, 1840; two seen on Smallmouth Sands, Weymouth, in 1851; two shot at Gussage All Saints (more than twenty miles inland), in 1870 (C. R. W. Waldy); one seen at Littlesea, Studland, May 1882; and one in the possession of Mr. Garland of Worgret Farm, shot some years ago on the Wareham river.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT. *Limosa lapponica*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 494; *Harting*, p. 53; *Dresser*, viii. p. 203; *Ibis List*, p. 177; Totanus rufus, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 156; Scolopax novoboracensis, *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

The Bar-tailed Godwit is a spring and autumn visitant, and a much commoner species than the preceding. Mr. T. M. Pike has seen more than fifty in a flock at Poole; and in May 1876 shot a pair there in full breeding plumage. Two frequented the Abbotsbury decoy during the summer of 1860, but

[1] It is curious that Pulteney was seemingly unaware that at the period at which he wrote the Black-tailed Godwit was to be found breeding regularly in the marshes of the eastern counties. Although Montagu, writing in 1813 (the date of the Supplement to his "Ornithological Dictionary"), remarked that in a late tour through Lincolnshire no trace could be found of the Godwit's breeding in the fens of that county, its extinction as a breeding species in Norfolk, according to Mr. Stevenson ("Birds of Norfolk," vol. ii. p. 249), was not effected until between the years 1829 and 1835.

they were not known to have nested there. Mr. Thompson, from whom I received this information, added that he saw a Bar-tailed Godwit there in September of the same year, which was probably one of the two above mentioned. Several were seen in Kimmeridge Bay during the winter of 1859; and four were shot on the Wareham river, and one at Poole, in the winter of 1872–73.

CURLEW. *Numenius arquata*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 499; *Harting*, p. 53; *Dresser*, viii. p. 243; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 94; *Ibis List*, p. 179; Scolopax arquata, *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

The Curlew is common in the Poole estuary, and breeds in that neighbourhood. Mr. Pike once killed twenty at a shot on the plain in Littlesea. An egg (one of four) was sent me, May 2, 1873, containing a mature chick, which is now in the County Museum collection, the egg being in the possession of Professor Newton. Subsequently (May 2, 1877), in company with Professor Newton and his brother Sir Edward Newton, we found a nest in which the brood had been recently hatched, and which the keeper, who knew of it, told us contained four eggs, and that the brood went off safely. An interesting account of the breeding of the Curlew in Dorsetshire is given by Mrs. Panton in her pleasantly written "Sketches in Black and White," published in 1882 (pp. 63–64); an account subsequently confirmed by Professor Newton in *The Field* of August 19, 1882. This bird sometimes wanders inland a considerable distance from the

coast. On November 10, 1887, a flock of fifteen was seen in a turnip-field at Houghton.

WHIMBREL. *Numenius phœopus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 507; *Harting*, p. 53; *Dresser*, viii. p. 227; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 100; *Ibis List*, p. 179; Scolopax phæopus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

The Whimbrel is a spring and autumn visitant. It is smaller in size than the Curlew, which it otherwise resembles, and on close inspection it may be further distinguished by the two dark bars on the head, which in the Curlew are absent. This bird appears to have benefited by the Wild Birds Protection Act, which prohibits shooting during the spring migration, and of late years it has appeared in increased numbers. It arrives during the last week of April, and becomes more and more numerous till the second week of May, when it leaves for its nesting haunts. At this time of the year Mr. Pike has seen as many as two hundred collected on the sandy shores of Littlesea. After the breeding season, namely, about the end of August or beginning of September, it reappears on the coast, and young as well as old birds may then be found in some numbers on the mud-flats. The local name for this bird is "Chickerel." Early in June 1882 a small flock appeared at Winterbourne Kingston. Two were shot at Poole in the spring of 1884; one at Swyre in the spring of 1885; one seen on the Wareham river, August 15, 1885; and four in a turnip-field on North Hill, Steple, Purbeck, May 6, 1887.

ORDER GAVIÆ.

Fam. Laridæ.

BLACK TERN. *Hydrochelidon nigra*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 516; *Dresser*, viii. p. 327; *Ibis List*, p. 185; Sterna fissipes, *Harting*, p. 76; Sterna nigra, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 254; Sterna nævia, *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

The Black Tern is a spring and autumn visitant, but very uncertain in its appearance. It is one of the many species which have ceased to breed in these islands through the disturbance it has experienced, and the drainage and reclamation of its breeding haunts. It is occasionally, but rarely, seen in the Poole estuary, Littlesea, and the neighbourhood of Weymouth. According to the late Mr. Thompson, several have been killed at Lodmoor; one at Ensbury, July 1839; and one at Frampton Court, Dorchester, in July 1871 (both these last-named stations being inland).

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN. *Hydrochelidon leucoptera*, (Schinz).

Yarrell, iii. p. 522; *Dresser*, viii. p. 321; *Ibis List*, p. 185; Sterna leucoptera, *Harting*, p. 169; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 257.

The White-winged Black Tern is a rare and accidental visitant. According to Mr. Hart of Christchurch, several have been seen on the Hampshire and Dorsetshire coasts in May and June, one

of which is preserved in the collection of Sir John Crewe. One was shot in Poole harbour in the month of June by Mr. T. M. Pike.

WHISKERED TERN. *Hydrochelidon hybrida*, Pallas.

Yarrell, iii. p. 527; *Dresser*, viii. p. 315; *Ibis List*, p. 184; Sterna hybrida, *Harting*, p. 168; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 260.

The Whiskered Tern is another rare and accidental visitant, only five instances having been recorded of its occurrence in Great Britain. One of these was shot in August 1836 at Lyme Regis (Yarrell). Its principal breeding-places are the swamps of Andalusia, the delta of the Rhine, and the marshes of the Upper Danube, Hungary, and of the Dnieper in South-West Russia.

CASPIAN TERN. *Sterna caspia*, Pallas.

Yarrell, iii. p. 536; *Harting*, p. 167; *Dresser*, viii. p. 289; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 268; *Ibis List*, p. 182.

The Caspian Tern, like the two last-named species, is an accidental straggler. Two were shot on the Weymouth backwater in the autumn of 1848 (W. Thompson), one in Poole harbour in 1869 (E. Hart), and one in the Wareham river in July 1872 (T. M. Pike). It breeds on the shores of the Mediterranean and Black Seas; on the island of Sylt, and various localities in the basin of the Baltic.

SANDWICH TERN. *Sterna cantiaca*, Gmelin.

Yarrell, iii. p. 540; *Harting*, p. 76; *Dresser*, viii. p. 301; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 272; *Ibis List*, p. 183.

The Sandwich Tern is a spring and autumn visitant, but does not breed with us, though possibly it may have done so formerly, as in Kent and Sussex. Mr. Pike informs me that he always sees some in April on the buoys of the Bar Channel at Poole, and that they return in August. Mr. Thompson says several are seen in the neighbourhood of Weymouth during the months of April, September, and October; one shot at Poole in 1839; a female bird shot on the Chesil Bank had well-developed eggs in the ovary, May 12, 1855; one was shot on the Wareham river by Mr. T. M. Pike, July 1872; two were procured in Poole harbour, September 12, 1877, and another in September 1885. Several have been seen from time to time at Christchurch in the months of April and September.

ROSEATE TERN. *Sterna dougalli*, Montagu.

Yarrell, iii. p. 544; *Harting*, p. 76; *Dresser*, viii. p. 273; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 277; *Ibis List*, p. 181.

The Roseate Tern is a rare summer visitant. It breeds on some of the islands off the north-west coast of France; formerly also off the coasts of Lancashire and Northumberland, and possibly in the Hebrides. Mr. Thompson noted its occurrence at Poole in 1841; and on one occasion, before the

"Sea-Birds Preservation Act" was passed, Mr. Rolls killed no less than seven at one shot at Weymouth. An immature bird, shot at Poole in the autumn of 1874, is in the collection of Mr. Pike.

COMMON TERN. *Sterna fluviatilis*, Naumann.

Yarrell, iii. p. 549; *Harting*, p. 75; *Dresser*, viii. p. 263; *Ibis List*, p. 180; Sterna hirundo, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 280; *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

A common summer visitant, frequenting the Chesil Bank, where it breeds annually. It may be seen following the mackerel-nets as they are being brought ashore, at one moment hovering overhead, and the next plunging with closed wings into the sea to capture some small fish which the encircling net has brought within view. Until recently this bird was considered to be the *Sterna hirundo* of Linnæus; but the species described by him under that name is evidently the Arctic Tern, as may be inferred from his description of the bill, which in the Common Tern has a dark tip, but in the Arctic Tern is red throughout its entire length.

ARCTIC TERN. *Sterna macrura*, Naumann.

Yarrell, iii. p. 553; *Ibis List*, p. 180; Sterna hirundo, *Harting*, p. 76; *Dresser*, viii. p. 255; Sterna arctica, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 284.

The Arctic Tern visits us in spring and autumn, but is much less numerous than the Common Tern, and does not breed in Dorsetshire. A great number

appeared in Poole harbour in October 1883 after a severe gale (E. Hart).

LESSER TERN. *Sterna minuta*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 558; *Harting*, p. 76; *Dresser*, viii. p 279; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 289; *Ibis List*, p. 181; *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

A regular summer visitant, frequently met with on the coast. Breakwater Point, at the mouth of Poole, is a favourite resort of this species, but it does not breed there. Mr. Thompson knew of several which had been shot in the neighbourhood of Weymouth in the months of May, July, and October. It breeds on the Chesil Bank, at Langton Herring, and Abbotsbury with the Common Tern. One in my collection was shot in Kimmeridge Bay; another in Poole harbour in the spring of 1873.

LITTLE GULL. *Larus minutus*, Pallas.

Yarrell, iii. p. 589; *Harting*, p. 76; *Dresser*, viii. p. 373; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 301; *Ibis List*, p. 191.

The Little Gull is rather a rare winter visitant. Its native home seems to be the southern parts of Russia and Siberia and the shores of the Caspian. A specimen in Viscount Portman's collection was shot at Bryanston, September 21, 1818; two were killed at Weymouth in 1847; one (a male) December 22, 1861, and one March 22, 1862; Mr. Pike obtained two in Studland Bay in 1872, one adult, the other immature.

BLACK-HEADED GULL. *Larus ridibundus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 594; *Harting*, p. 77; *Dresser*, viii. p. 357; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 310; *Ibis List*, p. 191; *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

Resident, and has become more numerous since the passing of the Sea Birds Preservation Act, since which date a few breeding colonies have been established, as at Rempstone and Studland Heath. There has been also a colony for some years on a pond belonging to Mr. Calcraft, at Grove, near Poole. The birds here have increased to such an extent that a great many commenced nesting on some small rushy islands at the head of South Bay, an out-of-the-way part of the harbour towards Corfe Castle. A colony on Littlesea was driven away by a dry summer. This species occasionally resorts to the downs, and wanders far inland in the winter and spring during stormy weather; but, unlike the Herring Gull, soon leaves again. In the autumn, after the breeding season, it is very abundant on the Poole estuary and on Littlesea.

COMMON GULL. *Larus canus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 613; *Harting*, p. 77; *Dresser*, viii. p. 381; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 316; *Ibis List*, p. 189; *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

An autumn and winter visitant in some numbers from the north. Specimens have frequently been shot in Poole harbour and in the neighbourhood of Weymouth.

HERRING GULL. *Larus argentatus*, Gmelin.

Yarrell, iii. p. 618; *Harting*, p. 77; *Dresser*, viii. p. 399; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 326; *Ibis List*, p. 188; Larus fuscus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

The Herring Gull is the most abundant and generally distributed of the genus. It breeds in every available locality on the chalk, oolite, and shale cliffs on the coast. It wanders inland in large numbers to great distances, remaining there as late as April and May. For some account of its nesting habits as observed on the Dorsetshire coast, see *The Zoologist*, 1865, p. 9677.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. *Larus fuscus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 624; *Harting*, p. 77; *Dresser*, viii. p. 421; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 319; *Ibis List*, p. 189; *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

Frequently seen on the coast, although it is not known to have nested here. It may very likely breed in the Portland and Purbeck Cliffs, and possibly also at Whitenore; but of this I have no authentic record. See *The Zoologist*, 1865, p. 9677.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL. *Larus marinus*, L.

Yarrell, iii. p. 631; *Harting*, p. 77; *Dresser*, viii. p. 427; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 323; *Ibis List*, p. 189; Larus nævius (young), *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

Compared with the Herring Gull, this is a much scarcer bird in the breeding season on the rocky cliffs

of St. Alban's Head and Gad Cliff, although during the autumn and winter its numbers are increased by arrivals from other breeding-stations. Most of the gulls leave the harbours in the evening, but this species remains on the mud-flats all night. Stokes, a professional gunner at Poole, informed Mr. Pike that he once shot at a lot with his big gun, mistaking them for geese at night, and killed fourteen. J. E. Stainer, of Swanage, informs me that as many as fifty have been seen together flying over Peverell Point in the autumn.

GLAUCOUS GULL. *Larus glaucus*, Fabricius.

Yarrell, iii. p. 636; *Harting*, p. 77; *Dresser*, viii. p. 433; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 330; *Ibis List*, p. 187.

A rare winter visitant, occasionally found wandering with other gulls. Yarrell mentions its occurrence at Weymouth. One passed through Mr. Rolls' hands which had been shot in Weymouth Bay; another was killed at Lodmoor, January 2, 1870; and a third in Poole harbour is in the possession of Mr. T. M. Pike.

KITTIWAKE. *Rissa tridactyla*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 650; *Dresser*, viii. p. 447; *Ibis List*, p. 187; Larus tridactylus, *Harting*, p. 77; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 340 Larus (tridactylus) rissa, *Pulteney's List*, p. 18.

During the autumn and winter the Kittiwake is very common, following the Sprats, at which time it may be seen in hundreds between Christchurch beach

and Old Harry. It does not breed on our coast, nor does it breed in the Isle of Wight (see *The Zoologist*, 1861, p. 7648). It occasionally comes inland in large flocks during very stormy weather, though never remaining long, as the Herring Gull does. A considerable number were observed on Charlton Down on December 1, 1886, after a hurricane. One was shot on Whatcombe Down in March 1871; another on Kingston Down in the spring of 1873; a third, in the possession of Mr. Pope, postmaster at Milborne St. Andrew's, was shot on the lake at Milton Abbey in the autumn of 1885, after having been there for several days.

IVORY GULL. *Pagophila eburnea*, (Phipps).

Yarrell, iii. p. 656; *Dresser*, viii. p. 349; *Ibis List*, p. 186; Larus eburneus, *Harting*, p. 174; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 337.

An extremely rare winter visitant. One was shot off Preston beach, Weymouth, in 1843, and another at Lodmoor, in the winter of 1850. In 1857, one which appeared with a flock of Herring Gulls in Portland Roads was shot by Mr. H. Groves, and another was killed in Weymouth Bay in Nov. 1860. In 1884 one which had been caught in a trap on the Fleet, Abbotsbury, was presented to the County Museum by the Rev. C. Torkington. A specimen in Mr. Pike's collection purchased at a sale in Studland out of a collection of local birds, is believed to have been shot in that neighbourhood.

GREAT SKUA. *Stercorarius catarrhactes*, (L.)

Yarrell, iii. p. 663; *Dresser*, viii. p. 457; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 346; *Ibis List*, p. 194; Lestris catarractes, *Harting*, p. 78.

An occasional spring and autumn visitant. Several have been shot near Weymouth. One was seen at Abbotsbury in the autumn of 1881; another, in the possession of Mr. Robert Burns of Wimborne, was shot in Poole harbour, 19th Nov. 1887, amongst a lot of Wigeon, one of which it had just struck down.

POMATORHINE SKUA. *Stercorarius pomatorhinus*, Temminck.

Yarrell, iii. p. 668; *Dresser*, viii. p. 463; *Ibis List*, p. 194; Lestris pomatorhinus, *Harting*, p. 78; Stercorarius pomarinus, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 349.

Like the last named, an occasional spring and autumn visitant. One was killed on the Weymouth Backwater, Sept. 23, 1868; another, in the possession of Mr. Roper Weston, was also shot near Weymouth; and an immature bird was obtained in Weymouth Roads, Oct. 14, 1870. A flock appeared in Poole harbour Oct. 16, 1879, and one was shot.

RICHARDSON'S SKUA. *Stercorarius crepidatus*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iii. p. 674; *Dresser*, viii. p. 471; *Ibis List*, p. 195; Stercorarius Richardsoni, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 353; Lestris parasiticus, *Harting*, p. 78.

An occasional visitant on migration, and more common than either of the two preceding species.

I have notes of one killed on the Chesil Bank in February 1855; another at Chickrell the same year; a third on the Wareham river in 1868; and a fourth at Weymouth in September 1870.

ORDER TUBINARES.

Fam. Procellariidæ.

FULMAR. *Fulmarus glacialis*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 1; *Harting*, p. 79; *Dresser*, viii. p. 535; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 430; *Ibis List*, p. 199.

The Fulmar with us is a rare winter visitant, as it is to other southern counties. Its habits being strictly oceanic, it seldom approaches land except at its breeding stations. One was shot between Bexington and Abbotsbury (R. B. Roe); and another was procured in Poole harbour, September 5, 1871.

GREAT SHEARWATER. *Puffinus major*, Faber.

Yarrell, iv. p. 12; *Harting*, p. 79; *Dresser*, viii. p. 527; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 417; *Ibis List*, p. 198; Procellaria puffinus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 19.

The Great Shearwater is not an unfrequent visitant in autumn to the coasts of Devon and Dorset. One was shot in Swanage Bay in the summer of 1868; another was caught alive in Poole harbour, June 7, 1877. A third seen in Durleston Bay, Swanage, on

June 12, 1885, was very tame, and allowed itself to be approached several times; the following day it was seen leisurely flying over Swanage Bay.

MANX SHEARWATER. *Puffinus anglorum*, (Temm.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 21; *Harting*, p. 79; *Dresser*, viii. p. 517; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 420; *Ibis List*, p. 197.

The Manx Shearwater is a spring and autumn visitant, and more frequently observed on our coast than the other species of the genus. Mr. Pike states that after the first heavy gales in autumn it is sometimes numerous in Poole Bay. On July 23, 1852, an immature bird was caught while asleep on the water in Portland Roads. Examples have frequently been met with in Kimmeridge Bay and off St. Alban's Head. One was shot at Swanage, April 5, 1886. The Portland fishermen call it the "Mackerel Cock," and assert that it remains concealed inland during the day, and feeds only at twilight and dawn.

DUSKY SHEARWATER. *Puffinus obscurus*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iv. p. 27; *Harting*, p. 176; *Dresser*, viii. p. 511; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 425; *Ibis List*, p. 198.

A rare spring visitant. I have only heard of one having been procured in this county. This, as I am informed by Mr. E. Hart, was caught alive in Poole harbour, June 8, 1877.

STORM PETREL. *Procellaria pelagica*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 42; *Harting*, p. 80; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 438; *Ibis List*, p. 196; *Pulteney's List*, p. 19; Thalassidroma pelagica, *Dresser*, viii. p. 491.

An oceanic species, occasionally driven inland by rough weather. Mr. Pike states that in August and September, after a strong breeze, he has often seen a dozen or twenty together to the westward of Portland. Several have been picked up dead in various parts of the county, sometimes at a great distance from the sea. One was shot in March 1873 at Melbury, upwards of eighteen miles inland. Many were washed ashore on the Chesil Bank, November 26, 1872, when the *Adelaide* went ashore. One of these was knocked down by a boy with his cap.

FORK-TAILED PETREL. *Cymochorea leucorrhoa*, (Vieillot).

Yarrell, iv. p. 37; Procellaria leachii, *Harting*, p. 80; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 443; Thalassidroma leucorrhoa, *Dresser*, viii. p. 497; Procellaria leucorrhoa, *Ibis List*, p. 196.

Like the last-named, an oceanic species, occasionally met with inland, or picked up dead at a distance from the sea after stormy weather. The late Mr. W. Thompson had three brought to him in December 1856, which had been picked up near Weymouth. Another was found on the Chesil Bank, November 21, 1871; and a third on Preston Beach, November 25, 1872, after a gale from the south-west. During the same gale one was found dead on Whatcombe

Down, sixteen miles inland. One in Mr. Pike's collection was found dead on Rockley Railway Bridge in the autumn of 1876. In January 1882 one was obtained in Clenston Wood, Whatcombe, and another was found about the same date at Charmouth.

ORDER PYGOPODES.

Fam. Alcidæ.

RAZOR-BILL. *Alca torda*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 55; *Harting*, p. 70; *Dresser*, viii. p. 557; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 375; *Ibis List*, p. 205; *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

During the breeding season the Razor-Bill frequents our coast in great numbers; at other times of the year it remains some distance out at sea. It occasionally suffers great privations through stormy weather, and the disturbed state of the sea-bed, by which the fish on which it feeds are either driven away or obscured from view. In February 1872 the Chesil Bank was strewn with their dead bodies. The late Mr. Thompson counted forty-one lying dead on Preston Beach, and not a Guillemot (whose habits are similar) was among them. The following winter and that of 1881–82 were equally disastrous; hundreds were then cast ashore on all parts of the coast. The *Alca pica* of Pulteney, believed by him to be distinct, is the young of the present species.

COMMON GUILLEMOT. *Uria troile*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 69; *Harting*, p. 74; Alca troile, *Dresser*, viii. p. 567; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 388; Lomvia troile, *Ibis List*, p. 206; Colymbus troile, *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

During the breeding season the Common Guillemot resorts to our cliffs in some numbers, depositing a single egg upon a ledge of the rock, without any attempt at a nest. After the breeding season both old and young go out to sea, and are not seen in the cliffs during the winter. The Ringed or Bridled Guillemot, which has a white line round and behind the eye, once thought to be a distinct species, is now considered to be only a variety of *Uria troile*. Two were picked up after a storm in Christchurch Bay, with a considerable number of the ordinary type.

A singular variety of this bird, having the bill and legs *yellow*, was shot by Mr. T. M. Pike near Poole, November 29, 1876 (*Zoologist*, 1877, p. 57).

BLACK GUILLEMOT. *Uria grylle*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 81; *Harting*, p. 74; *Dresser*, viii. p. 581; *Ibis List*, p. 207; Alca grylle, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 383; Colymbus grylle, *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

The Black Guillemot, as Yarrell states, is occasionally procured on the coast of Dorsetshire, but must be regarded as a rare visitor. Mr. H. Groves has one which was shot in Weymouth Bay in the winter of 1855. Another was killed at Swanage Bay in January 1862 (E. Hart), and a third in Weymouth Bay, December 10, 1874. Since then,

as I am informed by Mr. Pike, one in the collection of Mr. Bury, of Branksome Tower, was shot by him off Christchurch Beach.

LITTLE AUK. *Mergulus alle*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 85; *Dresser*, viii. p. 591; *Ibis List*, p. 208; Alca alle, *Harting*, p. 71; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 380; Alca alca (error for *alle*), *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

Like the last-named, a winter visitant, but of more frequent occurrence. Pulteney notices one that was shot at Child Okeford. After an experience of many years, Mr. Rolls, the bird-stuffer at Weymouth, stated that not more than seven specimens of this bird had passed through his hands. All had been picked up in the neighbourhood of Weymouth. One was shot on the Wareham river in 1860; another near the Portland Ferry-bridge, January 8, 1870. During the same month seven were seen in the Portland Roads, the wind at the time blowing a hurricane, which lasted a week. In the spring of 1873, one was shot in Poole harbour during a gale, and another was picked up dead on Damary Farm, Blandford, twenty miles from the sea.

PUFFIN. *Fratercula arctica*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 90; *Harting*, p. 70; *Dresser*, viii. p. 599; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 364; *Ibis List*, p. 208; Alca arctica, *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

The Puffin appears almost to a day during the last week in March, and breeds in our cliffs in company

with Guillemots and Razor-Bills. During the nesting season it may be seen sporting about, diving, floating, and skimming over the water with the greatest activity. As soon as the young are sufficiently strong the parents take them off to sea, and after July none are to be seen. Occasionally a few stragglers are left behind until the autumn, and more rarely a solitary bird or two may be met with in winter; but these probably are birds which have come to us from breeding stations farther north. I have notes of one shot in Poole harbour, February 3, 1847, and January 26, 1883 (E. Hart); one at Swanage after its autumn moult (J. E. Stainer). Thirty or more, which had not been long dead, were thrown upon the Chesil Bank after a storm in January.

It is a curious fact that the Puffin not only moults its feathers in autumn, but also sheds portions of its bill, whereby the shape of the bill is materially altered. An interesting account of this singular change, illustrated with a coloured plate, will be found in *The Zoologist* for 1878, p. 233. It was originally investigated and explained by Dr. Louis Bureau (*Bull. Soc. Zool. de France*, 1878), but English ornithologists had long before noticed an alteration in the shape of the Puffin's bill in summer and winter (*Zool.*, 1862, p. 8003, and 1863, p. 8331); and, as pointed out by Mr. Harting, some such change as that which is now known to take place was hinted at so long ago as 1804, by Bingley in his "Tour in North Wales" (vol. i. p. 354), in his account of the Puffin on the island of Priestholme.

Fam. Colymbidæ.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER. *Colymbus glacialis*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 96; *Harting*, p. 68; *Dresser*, viii. p. 609; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 402; *Ibis List*, p. 201; Colymbus immer (young), *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

A winter visitant, frequenting the coasts more or less commonly from October to May.

They appear regularly in Poole Bay in October, and Mr. Pike informs me that in May he has often seen them in full summer plumage, sometimes as many as eight or ten in a lot, as if making their way to their northern breeding-haunts.

In the spring of 1862, one which visited a piece of enclosed water, through the protecting care of Lord Digby stayed several weeks, and left unharmed. Pulteney notices one taken on Chettle Down (a distance of twenty miles from the sea). On the rocky shores of Kimmeridge Bay small parties are often seen in the winter. A fine male in full plumage was shot at Bexington, Abbotsbury, where another was shot in 1836, and is preserved in the collection of Viscount Portman. Several in summer plumage were killed at Poole in the early spring of 1883. "East Looe, a boat-channel in Poole harbour close to the main beach, is a favourite fishing-ground of these divers, and in 1883 hardly a day passed from October to March without one or two being visible in it" (T. M. Pike). *Colymbus immer*, which Pulteney, in common with Montagu and Pennant, con-

sidered to be a distinct species, is merely the Great Northern Diver in immature plumage.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER. *Colymbus arcticus*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 105; *Harting*, p. 69; *Dresser*, viii. p. 615; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 407; *Ibis List*, p. 201.

The Black-Throated Diver, although the least common of the Divers in point of numbers, appears almost every winter at Weymouth and Poole, but rarely in the breeding plumage. I have notes of its occurrence also at Charmouth, and in Studland Bay. Four were shot at Poole during the winter of 1883, one of which had the black throat well developed.

RED-THROATED DIVER. *Colymbus septentrionalis*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 112; *Harting*, p. 69; *Dresser*, viii. p. 621; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 412; *Ibis List*, p. 202; *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

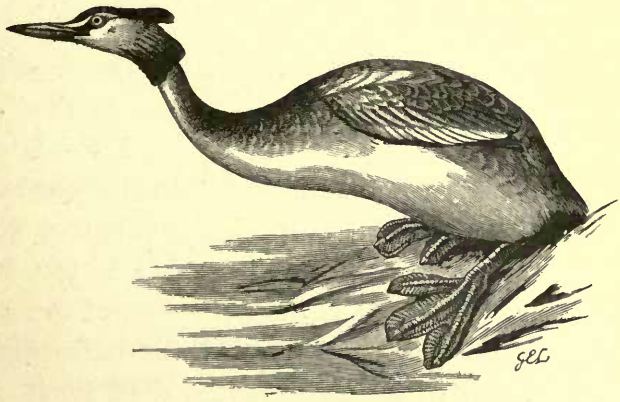
A common winter visitant along the coast. It is known as the "Sprat Loon," from the fact of its accompanying or following the shoals of Sprats in October. Pulteney mentions one shot at Weymouth after a storm in 1795, and Colonel Hawker notices the species as occurring in Dorsetshire. One with the red throat well developed was picked up dead in a ride of Clenston Wood, Whatcombe, seventeen miles from the sea, in the winter of 1873, after a gale; and another, in breeding plumage, was shot in Studland Bay, September 22, 1877. Mr. Pike states that it is always possible to procure a specimen

with the red throat well developed in October, and that he has sometimes shot them in this state of plumage with the wing-feathers moulting to such an extent that the birds were incapable of flight. This shows that they must swim down the coast from their northern breeding haunts, or else that, like the Penguins, they moult very rapidly.

Fam. Podicipedidæ.

GREAT-CRESTED GREBE. *Podiceps cristatus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 117 ; *Harting*, p. 69 ; *Dresser*, viii. p. 629 ; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 455 ; *Ibis List*, p. 202.



As a winter visitor the Great-Crested Grebe is not uncommon in the Portland Roads and at Weymouth. Mr. Pike saw "flocks" of more than twenty together off the Poole coast in November 1882. After Christmas they apparently go farther south, as

they are not so numerous then. They reappear in the spring, and stay about the harbours sometimes late enough to assume the full breeding plumage. Two were seen in Poole harbour in March 1873, in summer plumage with well-developed crests. Notwithstanding their short and narrow wings they can fly well, and often do so to escape from a sailing boat. If allowed to remain unmolested in the spring, it is not unlikely that some would stay to breed with us; but their appearance is too striking to escape observation.

RED-NECKED GREBE. *Podiceps griseigena*, Boddaert.

Yarrell, iv. p. 124; *Dresser*, viii. p. 639; *Ibis List*, p. 203; Podiceps rubricollis, *Harting*, p. 69; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 459.

The Red-Necked Grebe occurs only as a winter visitant, and never in such numbers as the last-named. Three were killed in Portland Roads, and one near the Portland Ferry-bridge in October 1850, and a young bird of this species was shot at Weymouth, February 13, 1852. Two shot by Mr. Pike in the winter of 1882 had the red colour of the neck well advanced. He states that it is not unfrequently to be met with in the neighbourhood of Poole, and he once shot one in Studland Bay in August which displayed the red throat. In December 1882 one was caught alive on the Wareham river, and another shot in Studland Bay.

SCLAVONIAN GREBE. *Podiceps auritus*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 128; *Dresser*, viii. p. 645; *Ibis List*, p. 203; Podiceps cornutus, *Harting*, p. 69; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 462.

Next to the Little Grebe, the Sclavonian Grebe is the commonest of the genus, especially in salt water. It is a frequent winter visitant, rarely met with late enough in spring to have assumed its characteristic breeding-plumage. One was caught on the ice in a pond at Kimmeridge during the severe winter of 1841; another was shot at Weymouth, February 15, 1870; a third in Poole harbour in mature plumage in March 1872; and a fourth in Studland Bay in the winter of 1882. According to Mr. Pike, the Sclavonian and Eared Grebes could be seen almost at any time in the winter of 1882 on the shoal waters of Studland Bay.

EARED GREBE. *Podiceps nigricollis*, C. L. Brehm.

Yarrell, iv. p. 133; *Dresser*, viii. p. 651; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 465; *Ibis List*, p. 204; Podiceps auritus, *Harting*, p. 70.

Rarer than the last-named, the Eared Grebe is a winter visitant, and the rarest of the genus on our coast. Yarrell says that it "has been killed in Dorsetshire." One was shot by Lord Clifton in the Portland Roads, April 8, 1876, and Mr. Pike has met with it in Poole harbour, where it has once or twice been observed in summer plumage.

LITTLE GREBE. *Podiceps fluviatilis*, (Tunstall).

Yarrell, iv. p. 137; *Dresser*, viii. p. 659; Podiceps minor, *Harting*, p. 70; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 468; Tachybaptes fluviatilis, *Ibis List*, p. 204; Colymbus auritus β, *Pulteney's List*, p. 17.

The Little Grebe, "Dabchick," and "Didapper," the smallest of the genus, frequents our rivers and ponds, moving towards the sea as winter approaches. It breeds at Littlesea and on the Wareham river. During severe weather these little birds get frozen out of the rivers, and then collect in numbers about the unfrozen channels of the harbours, and round the shores of Studland Bay.

[PIED-BILLED GREBE. *Podilymbus podiceps*, (L.)

Proc. Zool. Soc., 1881, p. 734; *Zoologist*, 1881, p. 334; *Ibis List*, p. 205.

At a meeting of the Zoological Society in June 1881, an immature specimen of this American bird was exhibited by Mr. R. B. Sharpe (*P. Z. S.*, 1881, p. 734) as having occurred the previous winter at Radipole, near Weymouth; but for reasons stated (*Zoologist*, 1881, p. 334) this is extremely doubtful. The species is common in North, Central, and South America, but has not been found in Europe. Moreover, the immature appearance of the specimen in question seemed to preclude the possibility of its having reached this country otherwise than in a preserved state.]

ORDER STEGANOPODES.

Fam. Pelecanidæ.

CORMORANT. *Phalacrocorax carbo*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 143; *Dresser*, vi. p. 151; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 650; *Ibis List*, p. 105; Graculus carbo, *Harting*, p. 75; Pelecanus carbo, *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

The Cormorant is resident and tolerably common along the coast, breeding notably at Ballard Down, between Swanage and Studland, and at Whitenore. It sometimes visits Morden Lake, and there is a tradition of the former existence of a Cormorant's nest in a tree on the Stour, near Langton, Blandford. One in my collection was shot some years ago at Stafford on the River Frome. In Poole harbour and in Weymouth Fleet twenty or thirty may sometimes be seen together fishing at low tide. In the month of June the ledges of the perpendicular cliffs round Old Harry are covered with nests and unfledged young. Nothing looks more weird than these grim, ungainly creatures as they sit watching every movement of the intruder who ventures on the brink of the cliff to survey their domain. At this season of the year the old birds may be seen flying to and from the harbour for fish all day long. They then often pitch in the Wareham river, which lies in the direct line of flight from Lulworth to Poole.[1]

[1] See *The Zoologist*, 1877, p. 384.

SHAG. *Phalacrocorax graculus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 151; *Dresser*, vi. p. 163; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 656; *Ibis List*, p. 106; Graculus cristatus, *Harting*, p. 75; Pelecanus cristatus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

Unlike the Cormorant, the Shag does not congregate in colonies to breed, preferring to nest in the holes and crevices of the sea-cliffs; in other respects its habits are similar. It is most abundant on the south coast of Purbeck from Gadcliff to Lulworth, and thence westward to Whitenore. Mr. Pike states that although very uncommon *inside* the Poole waters, it may be seen in some numbers between Peveril and Ringshead ledges. Mr. Harting, who took several nests and inspected others at Bat's Head, Swyre Cliff, Durdle Rock, and South Cliff, found the date of laying to vary considerably. He saw young birds that could fly, others that could not, eggs and empty nests, on the same day. He found the usual number of eggs to be three; and in cases where the young were already hatched, three was the number of young birds in the nest. He says the mode in which the old bird feeds her young is rather curious. Instead of putting her bill with food into that of her young, as is usual with most birds, just the reverse takes place; the young bird inserts its bill into that of its parent, and so takes out the food.[1]

[1] *The Zoologist*, 1865, p. 9676, and 1879, pp. 214, 266, 302.

GANNET. *Sula bassana*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 155; *Harting*, p. 75; *Dresser*, vi. p. 181; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 643; *Ibis List*, p. 106; Pelecanus bassanus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 22.

The Gannet does not breed anywhere on the Dorsetshire coast, but visits us in the autumn and winter months. It arrives about October and leaves again in April, being most plentiful during the Sprat season. The bill of this bird differs from that of other sea-fowl in the position and appearance of the nostrils, which are reduced to an extremely narrow slit on either side of the upper mandible, a provision which, with the peculiar form of the sternum, enables it to sustain the shock to its ponderous body when plunging into the sea from a great height after fish. When following the Sprats, they adopt different tactics, and instead of plunging upon them from a height, fly low over the surface of the water like Gulls, scooping up the Sprats without alighting. They fish during the flowing tide, and at the ebb rest motionless on the water, when they are sometimes so gorged as to allow a sailing-boat to run up within a few yards of them. Occasionally one is washed ashore dead or dying. Mr. T. M. Pike writes: "Gannets at times are numerous between Christchurch Lodge and the Poole Bar. On one occasion quite a hundred of these fine birds could have been seen taking their splendid 'headers' into the sea just outside the narrow spit of land between Bourne shore and the sandbanks. They never trust themselves inside the

harbour. If one is seen wending its way up one of the channels of the inner water, it is a doomed bird, having probably suffered some severe injury from shot or other accident. Once only have I observed a Gannet come in past the harbour-mouth; two days afterwards it was picked up dead, having been washed ashore just above the Poole battery. Several others succumbed to the south-west gales, and were driven on to the Studland shore."

ORDER HERODIONES.

Fam. Ardeidæ.

COMMON HERON. *Ardea cinerea*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 162; *Harting*, p. 55; *Dresser*, vi. p. 207; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 468; *Ibis List*, p. 107; Major ♂, Cinerea ♀, *Pulteney's List*, p. 13.

The only heronries in the county are at Bryanston, Crichel, and St. Giles. The heronry on Branksea Island has been broken up for some years,[1] but there is a large one on the Arne estate overlooking Wareham Bay. A few pairs also have nested in Goatham Wood on the Rempstone property. Some years ago a pair of Herons began to build in Whatcombe plantations, but were persecuted by the Rooks. There are also two or three nests every year in a plantation on Duddle Farm, Fordington. On the Arne Heath, a secluded spot, they often collect in great numbers, and remain motionless for hours together on the

[1] See *The Field Naturalist's Magazine*, 1834, p. 194.

lee side of some hill. They are exceedingly numerous in Poole harbour, where as many as a hundred may sometimes be seen fishing. In the summer of 1876 a pair built their nest at Littlesea, on the top of some reeds, not more than four feet from the ground: the only chick which was hatched tumbled out of its ark and was drowned.

PURPLE HERON. *Ardea purpurea*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 172; *Harting*, p. 55; *Dresser*, vi. p. 217; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 473; *Ibis List*, p. 108.

Although the geographical range of the Purple Heron is nearly the same as that of the Common Heron, it is not found so far north, and in England it is only a rare and accidental visitor. One shot at Hyde in this county was presented by Mr. C. Radclyffe to the County Museum; and another was procured in the neighbourhood of Dorchester in 1848.

SQUACCO HERON. *Ardea ralloides*, Scopoli.

Yarrell, iv. p. 191; *Dresser*, vi. p. 251; *Ibis List*, p. 109; Ardea comata, *Harting*, p. 149; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 486.

A rare and accidental visitant. One was shot at Encombe in 1865; another at Wyke Regis, July 1, 1867 (Thompson, *Zoologist*, 1867, p. 915); a third, shot by Mr. H. J. Cockeram of Chetnole, at Friar Maine, May 15, 1867 (J. Grant, *The Field*, May 25, 1867). This bird, as Mr. Cockeram informs me, was seen by his keeper for upwards of a week before he shot it, and spent nearly the whole day upon the same

tree in the wood, and in the evening went off to its feeding-ground in the water-meadows close by. A fourth was shot at Tincleton by Mr. Bridle.

NIGHT HERON. *Nycticorax griseus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 195; *Harting*, p. 56; *Dresser*, vi. p. 269; *Ibis List*, p. 110; Nycticorax nycticorax, *Seebohm*, ii. p. 496.

There is good reason to believe that this bird used at one time to nest annually in England in suitable localities.[1] Although a rare visitor to Dorsetshire, it has occurred on several occasions in the county. One shot at Radipole, near Weymouth, in May 1843, was sold to the Rev. J. Horner of Mells Park, Somersetshire. Another, curiously enough, was procured forty years later, in May 1883, near the same place.

LITTLE BITTERN. *Ardetta minuta*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 200; *Dresser*, vi. p. 259; *Ibis List*, p. 110; Botaurus minutus, *Harting*, p. 57; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 510; Ardea minuta, *Pulteney's List*, p. 14.

An occasional visitant. Pulteney mentions one shot on the Bere river, another at Upton, and a third at Lytchett. One killed at Preston, near Weymouth, in 1840, is now in the possession of Mr. Montague Guest. In 1866 three, which had been shot on the Wareham river, passed through the hands of Mr. Hart of Christchurch; and on March 25 of that year one was shot at Coombe Farm, Langton Maltravers.

[1] Harting, "Handbook of British Birds," p. 56.

BITTERN. *Botaurus stellaris*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 206; *Harting*, p. 56; *Dresser*, vi. p. 281; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 503; *Ibis List*, p. 111; Ardea stellaris, *Pulteney's List*, p. 13.

Although at one time resident in the English fens, the Bittern is now generally met with by snipe-shooters, and is not uncommon as a winter visitor. It is a skulking bird, and rarely seen except on the wing; its pale streaked plumage, the colour of dead reeds, favouring its concealment. Pulteney states that it is more frequently seen on the Frome than on the Stour, as being more marshy. One was shot at Bexington, Abbotsbury, in 1858; one at Bryant's Piddle in 1874; two at Manston in December 1875; three on the Bere river in the winter of 1875–76; one at Wareham, January 6, 1877; and one at Tarrant Crawford in February 1887. Mr. Pike informs me that, when residing in the neighbourhood of Wareham, in hard winters he often had Bitterns brought to him, and that his brother once killed one within a gunshot or two of Wareham Bridge.

AMERICAN BITTERN. *Botaurus lentiginosus*, (Montagu).

Yarrell, iv. p. 213; *Harting*, p. 150; *Dresser*, vi. p. 289; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 506; *Ibis List*, p. 111.

Montagu in the Supplement to his "Ornithological Dictionary," 1813, has, under the name of the Freckled Heron, described and figured the only specimen of this rare American visitor which has

occurred in Dorsetshire, although two other examples have been procured at long intervals in the adjoining county of Devon. The bird described by Montagu, which is preserved with the rest of his collection in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, was shot by Mr. Cunningham near Piddletown in this county in the autumn of 1804. It is a remarkable fact that this American bird should have been first described from a specimen obtained in Dorsetshire a year before it was made known to American naturalists by Wilson ("American Ornithology," vol. viii. p. 35, pl. lxv.). It may be distinguished from the European Bittern by its smaller size, and by the uniform colour of the primaries, which in our bird are barred.

Fam. Ciconiidæ.

WHITE STORK. *Ciconia alba*, Bechstein.

Yarrell, iv. p. 219; *Harting*, p. 54; *Dresser*, vi. p. 297; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 525; *Ibis List*, p. 112.

I am not aware that more than two specimens of this accidental visitor from the Continent have been observed in Dorsetshire. These were seen in Poole harbour in April 1884, and I believe were subsequently shot at Christchurch.

BLACK STORK. *Ciconia nigra*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 225; *Harting*, p. 145; *Dresser*, vi. p. 309; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 529; *Ibis List*, p. 112.

Although a rarer bird in England than the last-named species, it has been met with in Dorsetshire on two occasions. One was shot in Poole harbour in November 1839, as recorded by Yarrell (iv. p. 226), and is preserved in the collection of Lord Malmesbury at Heron Court, Christchurch; and a second, now in Mr. J. H. Gurney's collection, was procured at the same attractive spot for wild-fowl exactly ten years later, namely, in the autumn of 1849. In 1857 two gunners described to the late Mr. W. Thompson of Weymouth a bird which they had seen at Lodmoor, and which he was satisfied could be only this species. It was not, however, obtained.

FAM. PLATALEIDÆ.

SPOONBILL. *Platalea leucorodia*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 237; *Harting*, p. 54; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 514; *Ibis List*, p. 113; *Pulteney's List*, p. 13; Platea leucorodia, *Dresser*, vi. p. 319.

Although it is now known that the Spoonbill used formerly to breed in Norfolk and Suffolk, Sussex and Middlesex,[1] it has long ceased to be

[1] See Harting, *Zoologist*, 1877 (pp. 425–429), and 1886 (pp. 81–88).

more than an accidental visitant on migration. Pulteney states that in his day (a century ago) it was not unfrequently to be seen in the neighbourhood of Poole. One was shot in Lytchett Bay in June 1841; one on the Weymouth Backwater in 1846; one in Poole harbour, November 1848; and one at Abbotsbury decoy in the autumn of 1872. The last of which I have any note was an immature bird shot at Poole in October 1881. Mr. Pike writes: "I have seen Spoonbills several times in autumn about Poole harbour and the Corfe division of the estuary. In spring also it is occasionally observed. I remember one remaining about Wareham Bay for several weeks. It used to try and associate with the Herons, but its advances were often repulsed, the Herons mobbing it and shrieking at it. Nevertheless on several occasions I saw it perched among the high trees of the Arne Heronry, with several Herons close by; its ivory-white plumage being very conspicuous against the dark green of the fir-tops. On the mud, at a little distance, it looked like a large white Gull."

GLOSSY IBIS. *Plegadis falcinellus*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 231; *Dresser*, vi. p. 335; *Ibis List*, p. 113; Ibis falcinellus, *Harting*, p. 54; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 520.

The Glossy Ibis is another accidental visitant, which is occasionally met with in the autumn. One was killed in Poole harbour in 1839; a male and a female were shot in Lytchett Bay in August 1842.

Single birds have been procured at Moreton in 1855; in the Wareham meadow in 1857; and at Kimmeridge in September 1858. Since that date seven Dorsetshire specimens have passed through the hands of Mr. Hart of Christchurch. These were all obtained on the Wareham river and upper reaches of Poole harbour during the last week of September 1859. One of these is in the possession of Mr. J. Panton of Wareham, and another is in the collection of Mr. T. M. Pike. The late Mr. C. O. Bartlett had three in his collection, which had been shot in the neighbourhood of Wareham, and two others are in the possession of Mr. F. Squire of that town.

ORDER ANSERES.

Fam. Anatidæ.

GREY-LAG GOOSE. *Anser cinereus*, (Meyer).

Yarrell, iv. p. 253; *Dresser*, vi. p. 355; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 500; *Ibis List*, p. 115; Anser ferus, *Harting*, p. 59; Anas anser, *Pulteney's List*, p. 19.

Generally regarded as the parent stock of our domestic geese, the Grey-lag shows a resemblance to the farmyard bird not only in plumage, but also in the flesh-coloured beak with white nail, and pink feet. Pulteney, referring to its former nesting in the English fens, states that "it is common in the South of England in severe seasons;" but this is not the case now, the Grey-lag in Dorsetshire being very rarely

seen on our coast. One was shot at Moreton in the winter of 1885. Mr. Harting writes: "The fact is, the Grey-lag is rarely found on the coast anywhere, for, unlike the Brent, the Barnacle, and perhaps the White-fronted Goose, it prefers keeping inland, where it feeds on the green wheat by day where the country is very open, and in the flooded water-meadows at night. On the wing, Grey-lags may always be known from the other species above mentioned by their flying in a figure—generally a V or a Y; the others fly *en masse*."

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE. *Anser albifrons*, (Scopoli).

Yarrell, iv. p. 261; *Harting*, p. 60; *Dresser*, vi. p. 375; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 505; *Ibis List*, p. 116; Anas albifrons, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

Somewhat commoner than the Grey-lag in winter, but never plentiful. Like the last-named, it has a flesh-coloured bill with white nail, but may be distinguished by its orange-coloured legs and feet. Pulteney, who notices one shot near Gussage in 1795, says (p. 20): "Among the great variety of water-fowl shot on the mud-banks of Poole harbour, this is sometimes brought by fishermen up into the country for sale, but it is not at any time plentiful." I have notes of its occurrence at Kimmeridge in the winter of 1849; at Weymouth the same year, and again at Weymouth in February 1855 (W. Thompson). Mr. Pike writes: "All the Grey Geese which I have examined at Poole (very few in number) have been of

this species, and I have never seen more than a dozen or so together." He adds: "Grey Geese of every kind are getting scarce. I have not seen a dozen this winter (1887)."

BEAN GOOSE. *Anser segetum*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iv. p. 265; *Harting*, p. 59; *Dresser*, vi. p. 363; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 493; *Ibis List*, p. 115; Anas segetum, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

Although a more frequent visitor than the two preceding species, the Bean Goose is far from common. It may be distinguished from both by its orange-coloured bill with black nail, and orange-coloured legs and feet. I have notes of one shot at Weymouth in February 1855, and one at Lodmoor, November 15, 1871. Mr. W. Penney secured five in Poole harbour, November 24, 1876, all of which were eaten.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE. *Anser brachyrhynchus*, Baillon.

Yarrell, iv. p. 270; *Harting*, p. 60; *Dresser*, vi. p. 369; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 498; *Ibis List*, p. 116.

The Pink-footed Goose was not for a long time specifically distinguished from the Bean Goose, and even now Mr. Seebohm is of opinion that it can scarcely be regarded as more than a local or inland form of that species. The colour of the bill and legs varies somewhat between pink and yellow, but in the most typical examples may be described thus:

Bill pink with the nail and base black, legs and feet pink. It has been rarely met with in Dorsetshire, only two instances of its occurrence having come under my notice. One was shot at Moreton in 1855, and another in Tolpiddle Meadows, November 3, 1881.

BERNICLE GOOSE. *Bernicla leucopsis*, (Bechstein).

Yarrell, iv. p. 286; *Dresser*, vi. p. 397; *Ibis List*, p. 118; Anser leucopsis, *Harting*, p. 61; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 512; Anas erythropus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

The intensely black-and-white appearance which this Goose presents will always serve to distinguish it at a distance from any other species. It is this bird which was fabled to be produced from the parasitic cirrhipod *Lepas anatifera*, or *Barnacle*, so quaintly described and figured in Gerard's "Herbal," 1597. According to Pulteney, it appears on the Dorsetshire coast in October, but only in inclement weather. One is stated to have been seen on January 30, 1857, in Weymouth Backwater (W. Thompson); and the same winter some were shot there, one of which is preserved in the possession of Mr. H. Groves. A specimen in the County Museum, also, is believed to have been shot on our coast some years ago. The last of which I have heard were shot on the coast in February 1879, when one or two were sent to Mr. Hart, of Christchurch, for preservation.

BRENT GOOSE. *Bernicla brenta*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iv. p. 290; *Dresser*, vi. p. 389; *Ibis List*, p. 117; Anser bernicla, *Harting*, p. 61; Anser brenta, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 508; Anas bernicla, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

The Brent or "Black Goose," as it is called by the coast gunners, is the most abundant of all the wild geese, and the smallest. Mr. T. M. Pike states that it usually comes in from the sea when the mud-flats of Poole harbour appear at the falling tide, but after its first appearance in November the flocks become too wary to trust themselves inside, excepting between southerly and easterly winds, when the puntsmen cannot get at them. They then feed almost entirely outside the harbour in Studland Bay and at the back of the Hook Shoal upon the floating weed that comes out on the ebb-tide.

Early in February 1879 a great number of Brent Geese arrived during the prevalence of a strong east wind, and were very tame; sixty or seventy were shot by three gunners at the mouth of Poole harbour.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE. *Chenalopex ægyptiaca*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 300; *Ibis List*, p. 114; Anser ægyptiaca, *Harting*, p. 61.

It is doubtful whether this species has any claim to be admitted in the list of British birds, being so frequently kept with other ornamental water-fowl in a semi-domesticated state, and often escaping only to be shot. A small flock was formerly kept in

Morden Park. In 1850 two were shot at Dorchester, one of which is in the County Museum; another was shot at Crichel in February 1855; and a third at Lodmoor in December 1856. But it is impossible to say whether these had all escaped from confinement in this country, or had actually reached our coast from Africa.

WHOOPER OR WILD SWAN. *Cygnus musicus*, Bechstein.

Yarrell, iv. p. 308; *Harting*, p. 59; *Dresser*, vi. p. 433; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 480; *Ibis List*, p. 120; Anas cygnus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 19.

As a winter visitor the Whooper is not very uncommon, especially if the weather be very severe after Christmas; and it sometimes associates with the tame Swans on the Fleet at Abbotsbury, where two were shot on January 14, 1871. Two others were seen there in the winter of 1877, as reported by the Rev. A. C. Smith, *Zoologist*, 1877, p. 509. Colonel Hawker once killed eight at one shot in Poole harbour; but this was many years ago. Mr. Pike says he has never seen either a Whooper or a Bewick's Swan in the Poole estuary, although no doubt they do occasionally appear there. A considerable number of Swans get killed there in the winter, but those which he has examined have always proved to be the ordinary Mute Swan, *Cygnus olor*, many of them doubtless stragglers from the Swannery at Abbotsbury.

BEWICK'S SWAN. *Cygnus bewicki*, Yarrell.

Yarrell, iv. p. 315; *Dresser*, vi. p. 441; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 484; *Ibis List*, p. 121; Cygnus minor, *Harting*, p. 59.

Bewick's Swan, which is almost one-third smaller than the Whooper, is a rare visitant. One was shot on the Fleet Water, February 18, 1855; another at Chickerel, February 20, 1871; and a third at Henbury, Wimborne, in December 1879.

MUTE SWAN. *Cygnus olor*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iv. p. 324; *Dresser*, iv. p. 419; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 476; *Ibis List*, p. 119; Cygnus mansuetus, *Pulteney's List*, p. 19.

At the western extremity of the Fleet estuary, opposite Abbotsbury, is the only Swannery in the kingdom, belonging to the Earl of Ilchester.

The Fleet is about nine miles long and from a quarter to three-quarters of a mile broad, extending from the sea at Portland Bridge to Abbotsbury. The southern side is bounded by the Chesil Bank, called in a grant to Sir John Strangways (12 Ch. I.) La Brèche, a natural aggregation of pebbles, mainly flint, which touches the Isle of Portland at Chesil, and terminates at Burton Bradstock, about three miles west of Abbotsbury. Between these two points the Bank is joined to the mainland, and is not intervened by water, as is the case between Abbotsbury and the Ferry Bridge. The northern side of the estuary touches the parishes of Abbotsbury, Langton

Herring, Fleet, Chickerel, and Wyke Regis. It is probably the remains of a valley encroached upon by the sea before the Chesil Bank was thrown up. It is well adapted for the support of wild-fowl, and has been frequented by swans from a very early date. There are records of a Swannery long previous to the Reformation, of which the Abbots of the neighbouring monastery were possessors. At its dissolution, Henry VIII. granted it to Giles Strangways, ancestor of the present owner, who raised the number of swans in the course of fourteen years from 800 to 1500. The Swannery was the subject of litigation in the thirty-fourth year of Elizabeth. In the case of the Queen and Lady Young, widow, and T. Saunger (which is recorded in Coke's *Reports*, part vii. p. 15), an office[1] was formed at W., in county of Dorset, 18th September, 32 Elizabeth, before Sir Matthew Arundel and other Commissioners of the Queen under the Great Seal, that in the village of Abbotsbury there is a mere or fleet, into which the tide ebbed and flowed, and which is frequented by 500 swans, of which 410 are white (adults) and 90 cygnets, and which are in the possession of Joan Young and T. Saunger, and are about the value of 2s. 6d. each, and were unmarked at the time of the Inquisition. A writ was directed to the Sheriff of the county of Dorset to seize all the said white swans which are not marked. The Sheriff returned that he had seized 400 white swans. To which afterwards, in Hilary Term, 34 Elizabeth,

[1] An Inquisition made to the King's use of anything by virtue of his office.

the said Joan Young and T. Saunger pleaded that the said estuary, before the Inquisition taken, was seised by the Abbots of Abbotsbury in fee, as well as its banks and soil (*solum*), and that not only at the time of the Inquisition, but from time out of mind, there was, as now, a game (*volatus*) of swans and cygnets nesting, breeding, and haunting there, which the Abbot and his predecessors had the use and enjoyment of, and being wild, they were not accustomed to have them marked, but bred them up for the use of the kitchen and for hospitality, and that some of the cygnets they marked by cutting off the pinions of the wings to prevent flight. Subsequently the said Abbot surrendered the premises to King Henry VIII., who, about the thirty-fifth year of his reign, granted them to Giles Strangways, Esq., by letter patent in the fullest sense; and after the death of Giles it descended to Giles Strangways, his cousin and heir, who demised the said game of swans to the defendants for one year. It was ruled that all white swans not marked, and having gained their natural liberty and swimming in an open river, might be seized to the King's use by his prerogative, because they are royal birds. It was also ruled that the plea of prescription was insufficient, as the effect of prescription is that all swans which are *ferœ naturæ*, and which nest, breed, and haunt within the manor, can only be claimed as long as they remain there; but if the defendants had alleged that from time out of mind there had been a game of wild swans, marked, nesting, breeding, and haunting, and had

prescribed that the Abbot and all his predecessors had used at all times to have and to take to their own use some of the said game of wild swans and cygnets in the said creek, it would have been good; for although swans are royal fowls, yet in such a manner that a man may claim prescription, for they might have a lawful beginning by the grant, and yet without that prescription they do belong to the King by his prerogative.

The following statistics, obtained in different years and collected from various sources, will convey an idea of the proportions of this remarkable Swannery:—

1865. In this year there were "probably not more than 500 Swans including young birds" (Harting, *Zoologist*, 1865, p. 9671; 1877, p. 505). This was after a severe winter, when many perished from causes mentioned below.

1866. Less than 700 (*Truth*, 14th October 1880).

1873. Upwards of 1000 (Mansel Pleydell, *Catalogue of the Birds of Dorset*, 1873, p. 41).

1876. On May 12, "about 1100 Swans, 640 engaged in incubation, the remainder being birds varying from one to two or three years' growth. The swanherd stated that they do not lay before their third year."—J. C. [John Colebrooke?], *Land and Water*, 3rd June 1876.

1877. On July 19, "a flock of 700 of these noble birds—a goodly colony"—was inspected by the Rev. A. C. Smith (*Zoologist*, 1877, p. 511).

1878. On April 25, "Mr. J. H. Gurney was assured by the swanherd, who had held office there for more than fifty years, that the number of Swans then under his charge was fully 1300, of which nearly half were engaged in the duties of incubation" (*Zool.*, 1878, p. 208).

1880. "Over 1400 birds, or considerably more than double the number in 1866" (*Truth*, 14th October 1880).

A catastrophe happened in the winter of 1880

which reduced the number nearly half. The Fleet was frozen throughout during an extremely low spring-tide, when the water-plants growing at the bottom, becoming entangled in the ice, were torn up by the roots at the returning tide. Many of the Swans, thus suddenly deprived of their supply of food, either died of famine or migrated, and reduced the number to about 800, which average it now maintains.

The "View in the Swannery," which forms the frontispiece to this volume, was photographed during the summer of 1887. The Chesil Beach is seen in the distance: the sea lies beyond.

POLISH SWAN. *Cygnus immutabilis*, Yarrell.

Yarrell, iv. p. 340; *Harting*, p. 153; *Ibis List*, p. 120.

The claim of the so-called Polish Swan to rank as specifically distinct from the Mute Swan is disputed. It is said to differ from the last-named species in having a smaller tubercle at the base of the upper mandible in the adult, black edges to the gape, and slate-coloured legs; a further peculiarity being that the plumage of the cygnet is white from birth, and not brownish-grey, as is the case with the other species. This peculiarity, however, appears not to be constant (see Professor Newton's remarks in *The Zoologist* for December 1887, p. 463). The Polish Swan is unknown in the Swannery at Abbotsbury, and no *white* cygnets have ever been seen there.[1]

[1] Gurney, *Zoologist*, 1878, p. 208.

Two of these birds, however, both adult specimens, were shot in Poole harbour by Mr. T. M. Pike, January 24, 1882, and are deposited in Mr. E. Hart's museum of British birds obtained in the neighbourhood of Christchurch. A careful examination of these has left no doubt on my mind as to their specific distinctness from the Mute Swan.

RUDDY SHELDRAKE. *Tadorna casarca*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 347; *Dresser*, vi. p. 461; *Ibis List*, p. 122; Tadorna rutila, *Harting*, p. 157; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 524.

The Ruddy Sheldrake is generally regarded as an accidental winter visitant to our shores; but it is so frequently kept, with other ornamental water-fowl, in a state of semi-domestication, from which it sometimes escapes, that it is difficult to say whether the examples met with in a state of liberty are really wild birds or not. The first recorded British-killed example of this bird, according to Selby (Illustr. Brit. Orn., vol. ii. p. 293), was shot at Bryanston in this county in the severe winter of 1776, and at the date of his work (1833) was preserved in the Newcastle Museum. It does not appear how, or from whom, he obtained its history; Fox in 1827 was unable to pronounce it a British-killed specimen (*cf.* Fox, Synop. Newcastle Mus., p. 142). I have not heard of any other instance of its occurrence in Dorsetshire.

COMMON SHELDRAKE. *Tadorna cornuta*, (Gmelin).

Yarrell, iv. p. 352; *Dresser*, vi. p. 451; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 520; *Ibis List*, p. 122; Tadorna vulpanser, *Harting*, p. 61; Anas tadorna, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

On the sandy parts of the coast the Sheldrake is not uncommon, and breeds regularly in the rabbit-burrows, from which habit it has acquired the provincial name of "Burrow-duck." The young broods, as soon as they are hatched, are led down to the sea by their parents, and may then be seen in "troops" (as they are locally called) of from thirty to forty. On being approached, the old ones fly away, leaving the young to shift for themselves by diving. They may be easily shot when they come up, but you can seldom kill more than one or two at a time, as they always disperse before you can get very near them. Colonel Hawker, upon whose authority this statement is made, adds that a professional wild-fowler named Read, who was born and bred in the Isle of Purbeck, always asserted that as soon as the young are hatched they are led to the water, and there left in charge of only two or three old birds, which, "like schoolmasters" (as he said), have sometimes the care of about a hundred young ones. Thus they remain until all the "troop" are able to fly with them (about September) when they are seen no more until the first hard weather before Christmas (*Zoologist*, 1878, p. 131). During the severe winter of 1838, says Colonel Hawker, there were a great number of "Burrow-ducks" on the coast. "They were

the wildest of birds until half-starved by the freezing of the shellfish, and then they became the tamest of all wild-fowl." Being very handsome birds in their adult garb of black, white, and chestnut, they are often kept, with other ornamental water-fowl, on private water; but the young are troublesome to rear. Colonel Hawker writes:—"You may keep young 'Burrow-ducks' for five or six weeks, provided you give them crumbs of bread and only a little water three times a day. But if you let them get into the water, or even drink too much before they are full grown and fit to be turned out on your pond, you are almost sure to kill them. This appears quite a paradox with birds that in their wild state are always in the water; but such is the case."[1]

Occasionally in hard weather the Sheldrake wanders inland, and is sometimes shot at some distance from the coast. One in Viscount Portman's collection was shot at Bryanston in the month of January; another was killed at Berwick Farm, Burton Bradstock; a third was killed at Weymouth in November; and an adult male at Lodmoor in February 1870. In June 1884 a brood was seen on the Arne sand-banks; and a flock of them frequented Littlesea in July 1885.

[1] "Instructions to Young Sportsmen in all that Relates to Guns and Shooting," ed. 1859, pp. 220, 221.

WILD DUCK. *Anas boscas*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 358; *Dresser*, vi. p. 469; *Ibis List*, p. 125; Anas boschas, *Harting*, p. 62; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 559; *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

Although most of the birds that flock here in winter are visitors from a distance, a good many Wild Ducks are reared in the county, where there are many favourable breeding-haunts. Before the end of the close season, that is, the end of July, the quiet creeks of Poole harbour are alive with these birds, but a few days after its termination a great change ensues; their favourite haunts are abandoned; silence and solitude reign supreme; every bird has been shot or scared away by the relentless gunner.

Colonel Hawker, in alluding to "flapper-shooting," of which, as a true sportsman, he had no very high opinion, gives an accurate idea of the bird's haunts and habits. He says:—"To find a brood of these, go about July and hunt the rushes in the deepest and most retired parts of some brook or trout-stream, where, if you spring the old Duck, you may be pretty sure that the brood is not far off. When once found, 'flappers' are easily killed, as they attain their full growth before their wings are fledged; and for this reason the sport is more like hunting water-rats than shooting birds. If you leave the brood after having disturbed them, the old bird will remove them to another place long before the following day. When the 'flappers' take wing, they assume the name of 'Wild Ducks.' About the month of

August they repair to the cornfields till disturbed by the harvest-people. They then frequent the rivers pretty early in the evening, and show excellent sport to any one who has patience to wait for them."

The only wild-fowl decoys in Dorsetshire are thus described by Sir R. Payne Gallwey in his recently published work on decoys:[1]—

"At Abbotsbury, the residence of the Earl of Ilchester, eight miles south-west of Dorchester, at the head of the Fleet estuary, between St. Catherine's Chapel and the sea-shore, is an ancient decoy with four pipes. The date of its construction is not known to the owner, but it is on land that formerly belonged to the abbots of the monastery of St. Peter, and is, therefore, said to have existed before the Dissolution. Great numbers of wild-fowl—Duck, Teal, Wigeon, Tufted Duck, Pochard, and Golden-Eye—visit it; but in consequence of there being a good deal of open water outside the decoy, and shooting carried on during the season, no very large captures are made. About ten or twelve at a time, and a couple of hundred in the course of the winter, is the average take.

"At Morden, six miles north of Wareham, on the property of Miss Drax of Charborough Park, there used to be a decoy until 1856, when it ceased to be worked, and since then the shooting around it having been let, the place has been too much dis-

[1] "The Book of Duck Decoys, their History, Construction, and Management," 4to, 1886, pp. 71–74.

turbed to admit of the decoy being successfully carried on. The Morden decoy was a famous one in its day, being admirably placed to attract wild-fowl from the Poole harbour and estuary, a large extent of water and ooze, with numerous creeks, nearly six miles square. The late Rev. Thomas Pearce, well known as a contributor to *The Field* under the name of 'Idstone,' and who formerly rented this decoy, informed the author that it had cleared as much as £300 in a season, which would represent fully 7000 to 8000 fowl, taking expenses, and birds such as Teal and Wigeon into account. It is situated in a swampy valley surrounded by heath. The enclosure is four acres, with an open pond of 1¾ acres. It has five pipes, somewhat curiously planned. The decoy enclosure is planted with bog-myrtle, alder, and willow, with some oak and birch.

"This decoy could easily be put in working order again, and, from its position near the coast, should still do well. Charborough Park, near which it is situated, has always been famous for the wild beauty of its surroundings, as well as for the number and variety of the game and wild-fowl that frequent it."

At Wimborne a decoy was commenced by the late Mr. Coventry, of the Knoll, Wimborne, but it was never completed.

An interesting chapter on wild-fowl decoys in Dorsetshire will be found in Mrs. Panton's "Country Sketches in Black and White," to which reference has been already made under the head of "Curlew."

GADWALL. *Anas strepera*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 370; *Harting*, p. 62; *Seebohm*, ii. p. 530; *Pulteney's List*, p. 21; Chaulelasmus streperus, *Dresser*, vi. p. 487; *Ibis List*, p. 125.

The Gadwall, or "Grey Duck," as it is locally called, is a rare winter visitant; and from the fact that Colonel Hawker has no notes on this species in his "Instructions to Young Sportsmen," which contains so much interesting information about such wildfowl as he had personally met with, it may be inferred that it was never common here, even at a time when wild-fowl of all kinds were more plentiful than they are now, and breech-loaders unknown. Two were shot at Poole in the winter of 1841; one at Weymouth, and two on Branksea Island in January 1851; one in Poole harbour in the winter of 1867; another at the same place in January 1879; one at Fleet, near Weymouth, January 3, 1882 (T. J. Mann); the last heard of being a male, also killed at Poole, October 20, 1885.

SHOVELLER. *Spatula clypeata* (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 375; *Dresser*, vi. p. 497; *Ibis List*, p. 128; Anas clypeata, *Harting*, p. 62; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 554; *Pulteney's List*, p. 21; Anas rubens, young, *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

Although not so rare a Duck as the last-named, the Shoveller is an uncommon bird in Dorsetshire, where it is known chiefly as a winter visitant. Pulteney mentions one shot on a pond at World's End,

and another "near Christchurch." Three were shot on the river Frome near Dorchester in 1854; one at Owre Moyne, January 29, 1857; one at Poole in the winter of 1867; one above Julian Bridge, Wimborne, in December 1868, and a young male in my collection was shot in February 1869 at Milborne St. Andrew's, sixteen miles from the sea. The last of which I have any note was killed in Poole harbour, December 21, 1885. In an exceptional case the Shoveller has been known to breed in Dorsetshire. The discovery of a nest of this bird at Ilsington was made known by the late Mr. William Thompson of Weymouth in *The Zoologist* for 1857, p. 5757.

PINTAIL. *Dafila acuta*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 380; *Dresser*, vi. p. 531; *Ibis List*, p. 124; Anas acuta, *Harting*, p. 62; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 534; *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

Unlike the two preceding species, the Pintail is a regular and not unfrequent visitor in winter, although never very numerous. It frequently associates with Wigeon, both by day and night, and gets killed with these birds at the same shot by the punt-gunners on the coast. Colonel Hawker writes:—"I have often killed both at the same shot. They are most expert birds in running and diving when winged. I remember one winter stopping about a dozen at a shot on the mud, and I could only get six of them after a chase of three hours in a downpour of rain." Pulteney mentions the occurrence of the Pintail at

Bryanston and Morden Park, and I have notes of others shot at Abbotsbury, Puncknoll, Weymouth, Poole, and Kimmeridge Bay.

GARGANEY. *Querquedula circia*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 393; *Harting*, p. 63; *Dresser*, vi. p. 513; *Ibis List*, p. 126; Anas circia, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 551; Anas querquedula, *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

The Garganey or "Summer Teal" arrives in the spring on its way to its nesting-haunts, and there are few handsomer little Ducks than a male of this species in full breeding plumage. Pulteney says, "Large flights have been seen at St. Giles's and Crichel." I have notes of specimens killed at Stafford, Dorchester, and at Kimmeridge; three shot out of a small flock on the Fleet near Weymouth, March 26, 1870; one seen in Poole harbour by Mr. Pike in April 1878; two shot at Tweedmore, and two on the Wareham river in April 1879. Mr. Pike states that a brood or two are annually hatched off in his neighbourhood (*Zoologist*, 1878, p. 130). It is more rarely observed on its return southward in autumn, when comparatively few are killed by wild-fowlers. I learn from Mr. E. Hart that one, an adult female bird, was obtained at Poole on November 26, 1884.

Like the Teal, this bird prefers the neighbourhood of inland fresh-water pools, especially those surrounded or sheltered by flags or reeds; hence it is not often observed by wild-fowl shooters on the coast, except at the period of its arrival or departure.

TEAL. *Querquedula crecca*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 387; *Harting*, p. 62; *Dresser*, vi. p. 507; *Ibis List*, p. 127; Anas crecca, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 545; *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

Next to the Wigeon and the ordinary Wild Duck, the Teal is perhaps the commonest wild-fowl we have, being resident, and breeding here in suitable localities. Its numbers are increased in the winter by large accessions from the North. It is usually abundant on the lakes at Crichel and Morden Park, and several broods were hatched at the latter place in the summer of 1887.

WIGEON. *Mareca penelope*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 397; *Dresser*, vi. p. 541; *Ibis List*, p. 123; Anas penelope, *Harting*, p. 62; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 539; *Pulteney's List*, p. 21.

As a winter visitor, sometimes arriving in very large flocks, the Wigeon is well known to wild-fowl shooters on the coast. The females generally arrive before the males in October, and when the winter is nearly over, they take the lead again, and leave the males behind. As a proof of this, Colonel Hawker mentions that a wild-fowler of his acquaintance shot in Poole harbour, one night about the beginning of March, forty-four Wigeon, all males but two.

On the Dorsetshire coast the shooters' terms for a large flock of Wigeon are a *company;* for about thirty or forty, a *bunch* or *trip* of birds; and for

about ten or twelve, a little *knob*. They also call a creek a *lake*, and the smaller creeks or drains *latches*. The former is a general term among people on the coast, but the latter in the neighbourhood of Lymington is called a *spreader*.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD. *Fuligula rufina*, (Pallas).

Yarrell, iv. p. 407; *Harting*, p. 159; *Dresser*, vi. p. 559; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 567; *Ibis List*, p. 128.

This very rare Duck was first entered on the list of British birds in 1818, since which date not more than five-and-twenty instances have been recorded of its occurrence in the British Islands. One preserved in the collection of Viscount Portman, was shot on the Stour at Bryanston in the early part of this century.

POCHARD. *Fuligula ferina*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 413; *Harting*, p. 63; *Dresser*, vi. p. 551; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 575; *Ibis List*, p. 130; Anas ferina, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

The Pochard or "Dunbird," though best known as a winter visitant, sometimes remains to breed in Dorsetshire, and of late years several instances have occurred of its nesting here. A few broods are annually hatched in the neighbourhood of the Poole estuary. During the summer of 1876 at least three broods of the Pochard were reared near Swanage. In June of that year Professor Newton saw two female Pochards there, accompanied by their young,

and a third, which was then alone, but which the keeper assured him also had a brood. Since then a few broods have been safely reared there annually. The following summer Mr. T. M. Pike found the Pochard breeding near Wareham (*Zoologist*, 1877, p. 385), where about thirty young birds were hatched out early in June. Pulteney says of this species:—"The Pochard is seen up the country in fresh water; two were killed at Bryanston in 1796, and one at Spettisbury in 1795." In a folio copy of Pennant's "British Birds" in the Bryanston Library there are three entries of the occurrence of the Pochard in the handwriting of the father of Viscount Portman, one shot at Bryanston in 1776, another December 1, 1805, and a third January 1, 1815. Mr. Rogers, a poulterer of Poole, had a hybrid between the Pochard and Wigeon.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK. *Fuligula nyroca*, Güldenstadt.

Yarrell, iv. p. 418; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 571; Fuligula ferruginea, *Harting*, p. 64; Nyroca ferruginea, *Dresser*, vi. p. 581; *Ibis List*, p. 130.

The Ferruginous Duck, or, as it is sometimes called, the "White-eyed Pochard," has a wide geographical range, extending from Cashmere to Algeria, including Southern Spain and the valley of the Danube. It is an accidental straggler to the British Islands, and of rare occurrence in Dorsetshire, although it is possible it may often escape notice when swimming amongst more brightly coloured fowl, for

at a little distance it looks not unlike a female Golden-Eye. One was killed at the mouth of the Wareham river, January 3, 1879, by a well-known puntsman named Charles Orchard. It was swimming with a lot of Pochards at the time. Mr. Hart, who preserved it, states that it was in fine plumage.

SCAUP. *Fuligula marila*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 423; *Harting*, p. 64; *Dresser*, vi. p. 565; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 579; *Ibis List*, p. 129; Anas marila, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

The Scaup is a winter visitant, but although it has been occasionally killed at Poole, Weymouth, and Abbotsbury, it must be reckoned among our rarer Ducks. Its local name at Weymouth and Poole is "Curre." Pulteney says of it:—"This bird is very rare in Dorsetshire; one shot in Lytchett Bay had the craw full of young periwinkles."

TUFTED DUCK. *Fuligula cristata*, (Leach).

Yarrell, iv. p. 430; *Harting*, p. 66; *Dresser*, vi. p. 573; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 583; *Ibis List*, p. 129; Anas fuligula, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

Like the last-named, the Tufted Duck is a winter visitant, and of more frequent occurrence. It is often found associating with the Golden-Eye, and sometimes remains until quite late in the spring. I have the authority of Professor Newton for stating that it nested in this county in 1876. (See *The*

Field, March 10, 1877.) It is very common on the lakes at Crichel and Morden Park. At Weymouth and Poole it is known as the "Blue-Bill" and "Blue-billed Curre."

GOLDEN-EYE. *Clangula glaucion*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 435; *Harting*, p. 66; *Dresser*, vi. p. 595; *Ibis List*, p. 131; Fuligula clangula, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 590; Anas clangula, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

This handsome Duck is an annual visitor in winter, at which season it may be found generally distributed about our coasts in small flocks, occasionally coming inland. The adult males in full plumage are less frequently shot than immature males and females, owing to their extreme wariness, for they usually keep on the off-side of the rivers, while the rest will pass less cautiously. Golden-Eyes are not unfrequently seen in winter on the lakes at Crichel and Morden Park, and about Littlesea and Abbotsbury, but more frequently off the open coast. A small flock appeared on Weymouth Backwater, December 9, 1871 (W. Thompson). Several were killed in January and February 1879 about Poole and Wareham, and in Kimmeridge Bay.

LONG-TAILED DUCK. *Harelda glacialis*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 446; *Harting*, p. 66; *Dresser*, vi. p. 617; *Ibis List*, p. 133; Fuligula glacialis, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 598; Anas glacialis, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

The Long-tailed Duck arrives annually on our coast as a winter visitant. It is a hardy bird, and

remains in the North as long as any surface of water remains unfrozen. Pulteney says of it:—"It visits the county of Dorset in hard winters, and has been shot at St. Giles." In 1840 two were shot at Poole as late as the month of May; a young male in the Portland Roads, January 17, 1852; one on the Weymouth Backwater in January 1857; one shot and another seen on the Fleet, Abbotsbury, in December 1874; an immature female shot at Poole in December 1885. In November 1887 several of these birds frequented Poole harbour, and five were shot. One of these, an old male in good plumage, I secured for my collection; the other four were immature birds.

EIDER DUCK. *Somateria mollissima*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 457; *Harting*, p. 67; *Dresser*, vi. p. 629; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 616; *Ibis List*, p. 134.

Although it breeds in the North of England and Scotland, the Eider Duck is a rare straggler to Dorsetshire. A few appear to wander southward down the east coast in autumn, and find their way into the English Channel, passing along the Dorsetshire coast to Devon and Cornwall. One was shot at Poole in 1868; a young bird was killed on the Fleet, out of a flock of Wigeon, in December 1869. Nine were seen at the same place, November 27, 1871, of which four were shot (W. Thompson). One was obtained at Poole, November 26, 1884.

COMMON SCOTER. *Œdemia nigra*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 472; *Harting*, p. 66; *Dresser*, vi. p. 663; *Ibis List*, p. 135; Fuligula nigra, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 602.

The "Black Duck," as it is locally called, is a common winter visitant, and often seen in flocks off the coast, as well as in the estuaries. It especially affects the rocky coast at Kimmeridge. In the winter of 1863, after a severe gale, Mr. H. Symmonds rode one down at Milborne St. Andrew's, which is not less than sixteen miles from the sea. In 1881 one was shot at Swanage.

VELVET SCOTER. *Œdemia fusca*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 476; *Harting*, p. 67; *Dresser*, vi. p. 657; *Ibis List*, p. 135; Fuligula fusca, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 605; Anas fusca, *Pulteney's List*, p. 20.

The Velvet Scoter, which may always be known from the preceding species by the white bar across the wing and a spot of the same colour near the eye, is an accidental visitor to our coast in winter, mixing with the Common Scoter in the proportion of not more than one in twenty, Pulteney says of it:— "This Duck is seldom seen in Dorset; a female was shot on the Stour near Blandford." The late Mr. W. Thompson of Weymouth saw one at a poulterer's shop in Poole, January 5, 1856, which had been shot in the harbour. Another was procured in Portland Roads, February 2, 1869. Colonel Hawker, in his "Instructions to Young Sportsmen," states that he

has killed these ducks on the Dorsetshire coast about August, which would be unusually early in the autumn for them to appear.

SURF SCOTER. *Œdemia perspicillata*, (L.)

Yarrell, iv. p. 481; *Harting*, p. 162; *Dresser*, vi. p. 669; *Ibis List*, p. 136; Fuligula perspicillata, *Seebohm*, iii. p. 607.

So far as I am aware, only two examples of the Surf Scoter have been met with within the limits of the county, namely, one near Weymouth in the winter of 1851 (Yarrell), and the other, a young male, shot in Weymouth Backwater in company with a Golden-Eye in December 1853 (*Zoologist*, 1854, p. 4255).

GOOSANDER. *Mergus merganser*, L.

Yarrell, vi. p. 488; *Harting*, p. 68; *Dresser*, vi. p. 685; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 625; *Ibis List*, p. 136; *Pulteney's List*, p. 19.

During the winter months the Goosander is not an unfrequent visitor to the estuaries and tidal harbours. Pulteney notices a pair which were shot at Bryanston in 1776; and one procured at the same place in 1815 is in Viscount Portman's collection. The late Mr. W. Thompson of Weymouth noted it as being occasionally shot in that neighbourhood, and probably more have been met with than have come to my knowledge, for professional gunners confound the Goosander (especially the females and immature males) with the Red-breasted Merganser,

next to be mentioned. One was shot in the Holme Meadows, January 1866; a male and female in the Fleet, December 14, 1874; three seen and one killed at Lodmoor, December 3, 1872; two more were shot on the Wareham river during the same winter; one killed at Hyde in the collection of Mr. C. Radclyffe; and a male and female shot in Poole harbour, December 1882.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER. *Mergus serrator*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 494; *Harting*, p. 67; *Dresser*, vi. p. 693; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 629; *Ibis List*, p. 136; *Pulteney's List*, p. 19.

Commoner a good deal than the last-named, the Red-breasted Merganser is a regular winter visitant. Pulteney has included it in his catalogue as having been "shot in the Stour, 1776, and in several other places." One was obtained at Ensbury in the winter of 1846; two at Poole in the winter of 1872–73; in February 1870 Mr. Frederick Fane saw a number on the Avon, five or six of which were males; one, a female, was shot at Hyde in December 1878; a male and a female in Poole harbour, December 1882. Mr. Pike says that this bird arrives in November in flocks, a hundred or more being seen together in the harbours. "They are very wary and are rarely shot. When they get into a narrow channel and commence diving for fish, the gulls hover over them in a very excited manner, occasionally darting down to the surface of the water. Probably the advent of so many Mergansers diving

and rushing about in the confined waters of a mud channel drives the fish in all directions and affords the gulls a chance of securing some on the surface. A fine Merganser met with its end in an unusual way in the winter of 1883. On emerging after a dive, it was observed to be in difficulties, finally coming ashore with something attached to its bill. The bird was caught and found to have inserted its bill into a large cockle weighing several ounces, which had closed its valves upon it and held both the mandibles securely.

Note.—In a "Catalogue of the Mammalia, Birds, &c., found in Dorsetshire," contributed by the late Mr. J. C. Dale to the *Naturalist*, edited by Neville Wood (vol. ii., 1837, p. 181), and which is little more than a bare list of names, the Hooded Merganser, *Mergus cucullatus*, is included. This is probably a mistake, as no particulars of any kind are afforded, which, in the case of so rare a bird, would scarcely have been omitted intentionally. So far as I am aware, there is no evidence of the occurrence of this species in Dorsetshire.

SMEW. *Mergus albellus*, L.

Yarrell, iv. p. 499; *Harting*, p. 67; *Dresser*, vi. p. 699; *Seebohm*, iii. p. 636; *Ibis List*, p. 137; *Pulteney's List*, p. 19.

Although never very numerous as a species, the Smew occurs every winter, generally in small flocks, which soon become scattered about our bays and

estuaries, many individuals finding their way for some distance up the rivers. Pulteney remarks that in hard winters it has been "shot on the coast, about the fleets at Poole, upon the Stour at Bryanston, and about Morden pond and decoy." Nine were shot in Portland Roads in one week in the winter of 1849–50, about which time others were shot at Weymouth. Mr. H. Groves has a pair procured at Weymouth in the winter of 1857. In January 1860 a fine male was killed on the water in Morden Park, and since that date scarcely a winter elapses without several being reported from different parts of the coast, or from inland waters at no great distance from the sea.

The male Smew in fully adult plumage is rarely obtained, females and young birds being more frequently met with. Young males during their first year resemble the females, and do not attain the white plumage of the adult male until their second autumn moult; at which period also the young females assume the adult plumage, and exhibit for the first time the black lores. It is somewhat curious that Colonel Hawker, who must have been well acquainted with the wild-fowl frequenting the coast of Dorsetshire, makes no mention of this species.

APPENDIX.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER (page 12).

At Winterbourne Kingston, on the 24th June 1887, whilst a carter in the employ of Mr. E. Besent was cutting a field of clover with a mowing-machine, he disturbed a large hawk from her nest, which was immediately joined by another equal in size, but of lighter plumage. The sudden apparition of so large a bird frightened the horse, but before the machine reached the nest, the carter descried it. It was on the bare ground, about the size of a man's hat, composed of grass and feathers, and contained four eggs, which were bluish white, with very indistinct reddish spots, and slightly incubated. On comparing one of these with a series in the Natural History Museum it was apparent that it belonged to Montagu's Harrier, *Circus cineraceus*. The grass in the neighbourhood of the nest was much damaged and trodden down. The birds frequented the neighbourhood for some days afterwards. They were seen in a field of sainfoin a quarter of a mile from the clover-field before and after the 24th; and during the course of cutting it, in the month of July, the mowing-machine disturbed "a large brown hawk." No nest was found, though Mr. Besent thinks there was one destroyed by the machine. Some time afterwards I saw two Harriers on the wing, either birds of the year or females, leisurely beating a stubble-field within half a mile of Kingston.

BLACK GROUSE (page 68).

Sixty years ago, when the condition of the country was more favourable to the bird's habits, and there was much less shooting than at present, black game was more plentiful in Dorsetshire, especially towards the Hampshire border.

Colonel Hawker has left a record of what was in his time considered a good day's sport with Black Grouse in the South of England. He writes :[1]—

"The best, or at all events one of the best, day's black-game shooting that was ever known, I believe, in these parts [*i.e.*, the borders of Hants and Dorset], I had with the late Mr. John Ponton at Uddens. We found on this gentleman's manor eleven brace in one day, which was considered by the keepers extraordinary success; and we killed eight brace without missing a shot. But notwithstanding all our birds were as strong and as large as the old ones, we never even saw an old cock the whole day.[2] The black game here are briefly called 'poults.' The fagging for them is the hardest labour of any sport I know, because you have to work in the hottest weather through stiff heath, which is so much intercepted by fir plantations and bogs, as for the most part to prevent your riding; and from the very few shots that you are likely to get in a day, you have not the same encouragement as in the abundant sport of grouse-shooting. But, notwithstanding all, I was never so much pleased with any day's sport as with my first day's black-game shooting in Dorsetshire."

WOODCOCK (page 89).

The following incident, related by Colonel Hawker in his "Instructions to Young Sportsmen" (ed. 1859, p. 275), as having occurred not only in Dorsetshire, but on the property of the present writer, seems especially appropriate for quotation in a book on the birds of this county. Colonel Hawker observes :—

"To prove that Woodcocks, on having migrated into this country, will repair to the same haunts for a succession of winters, I shall mention a circumstance, not as having pilfered it from Mr.

[1] "Instructions to Young Sportsmen," ed. 1859, p. 235.

[2] The cause of the escape of the old cocks was not due so much, perhaps, to their wariness on this occasion, as to their being in the neighbouring woods or plantations. I believe they usually spend the day on the tops of the highest trees, keeping a vigilant eye on what is passing around. During many years' experience, I never recollect seeing an old cock on our heaths, only grey hens and poults.—J. C. M. P.

Bewick or Mr. Daniel, but because it was related to me by the late Mr. Pleydell himself when I was at Whatcombe House, where the bird is now preserved. In Clenston Wood (a covert belonging to the above place in Dorsetshire) a Woodcock was taken alive in one of the rabbit nets, in the month of February 1798. Mr. Pleydell, after having a piece of brass marked, and passed round its left leg, allowed the bird to be set at liberty; and in the month of December following, he shot this Woodcock in the very same coppice where it had been first caught by his gamekeeper."

The same story is given somewhat differently in Bewick's "British Birds" (vol. ii. ed. 1805, p. 63, note), to which work it was communicated by Sir John Trevelyan. Thus:—

"In the winter of 1797 (*i.e.* 1797–98), the gamekeeper of E. M. Pleydell, Esq., of Whatcombe in Dorsetshire, brought him a Woodcock which he had caught in a net set for rabbits, alive and unhurt. Mr. Pleydell scratched the date upon a bit of thin brass, and bent it round the Woodcock's leg, and let it fly. In December the next year [*i.e.*, December 1798], Mr. Pleydell shot this bird with the brass about its leg in the very same wood where it had been first caught by the gamekeeper."

Neither version is quite correct. The facts are these:—*Three* Woodcocks were caught in the Whatcombe coverts the same year in the month of February. My grandfather, after placing a brass ring on a leg of *each*, let them go, and *all three* were killed the following winter. Two were preserved, and are still here at Whatcombe; the other escaped notice until after it had been cooked and sent to table, when the discoloured ring attracted attention. I think it may be inferred that the three birds had remained here the whole year.—J. C. M. P.

INDEX.

Accentor modularis, 22.
Accipiter nisus, 7.
Acredula caudata, 35.
„ *rosea*, 35.
Acrocephalus arundinaceus, 27.
„ *nævius*, 28.
„ *phragmitis*, 27.
„ *schœnobœnus*, 27.
„ *streperus*, 27.
Ægialitis hiaticula, 81.
„ *cantiana*, 81.
Alauda alpestris, 40.
„ *arborea*, 40.
„ *arvensis*, 40.
„ *minor*, 38.
„ *pratensis*, 39.
„ *trivialis*, 38.
Alca alle, 117.
„ *arctica*, 117.
„ *grylle*, 116.
„ *impennis*, Introduction.
„ *torda*, 115.
„ *troile*, 116.
Alcedo ispida, 61.
Aluco flammeus, 13.
Ampelis garrulus, 36.
Anas acuta, 153.
„ *albifrons*, 136.
„ *anser*, 135.
„ *bernicla*, 139.
„ *boscas*, 149.
„ *circia*, 154.
„ *clangula*, 159.
„ *clypeata*, 152.
„ *crecca*, 155.
„ *cygnus*, 140.
„ *erythropus*, 138.
Anas ferina, 156.
„ *fuligula*, 158.
„ *fusca*, 161.
„ *glacialis*, 159.
„ *marila*, 158.
„ *penelope*, 155.
„ *querquedula*, 154.
„ *rubens*, 152.
„ *segetum*, 136.
„ *strepera*, 152.
„ *tadorna*, 147.
Anser ægyptiacus, 139.
„ *albifrons*, 136.
„ *bernicla*, 139.
„ *brachyrhynchus*, 137.
„ *brenta*, 139.
„ *cinereus*, 135.
„ *cygnus*, 140.
„ *ferus*, 135.
„ *leucopsis*, 138.
„ *segetum*, 137.
Anthus arboreus, 38.
„ *obscurus*, 39.
„ *pratensis*, 39.
„ *richardi*, 39.
„ *trivialis*, 38.
Aquila chrysaëtus, 1.
„ *lagopus*, 9.
Archibuteo lagopus, 9.
Ardea cinerea, 128.
„ *comata*, 129.
„ *minuta*, 130.
„ *purpurea*, 129.
„ *ralloides*, 129.
„ *stellaris*, 131.
Ardetta minuta, 130.
Asio accipitrinus, 14.

Asio brachyotus, 14.
„ *otus*, 14.
Astur palumbarius, 7.
Auk, Great, *Introduction*, x.
„ Little, 117.
Avocet, 84.

Barnacle, 138.
Barn Owl, 13.
Bar-tailed Godwit, 99.
Bean Goose, 137.
Bearded Titmouse, 36.
Bee-eater, 60.
Bernicla brenta, 139.
„ *leucopsis*, 138.
Bewick's Swan, 141.
Bittern, American, 131.
„ Common, 131.
„ Little, 130.
Blackbird, 21.
Black Grouse, 68.
Blackcap, 30.
Bluethroat, 24.
Blue Tit, 34.
Bohemian Waxwing, 36.
Botaurus lentiginosus, 131.
„ *minutus*, 130.
„ *stellaris*, 131.
Brambling, 43.
Brent Goose, 139.
Bullfinch, 48.
Bunting Cirl, 42.
„ Corn, 41.
„ Reed, 41.
„ Snow, 41.
Bustard, Great, 74.
„ Little, 76.
Buteo lagopus, 9.
„ *vulgaris*, 8.
Buzzard, Common, 8.
„ Honey, 9.
„ Rough-legged, 9.

Caccabis rufa, 69.
Calamophilus biarmicus, 36.
Calidris arenaria, 95.
Caprimulgus europæus, 57.
Carduelis elegans, 46.
„ *spinus*, 46.
Certhia familiaris, 33.
Chaffinch, 43.
Charadrius calidris, 95.
„ *cantianus*, 81.
„ *hiaticula*, 81.
„ *himantopus*, 85.
„ *interpres*, 83.
„ *morinellus*, 80.
„ *œdicnemus*, 77.
„ *pluvialis*, 81.
Chaulelasmus streperus, 152.
Chelidon urbica, 56.
Chenalopex ægyptiacus, 139.
Chiffchaff, 32.
Chough, 50.
Chrysomitris spinus, 46.
Ciconia alba, 132.
„ *nigra*, 133.
Cinclus aquaticus, 19.
Circus æruginosus, 10.
„ *cineraceus*, 12.
„ *cyaneus*, 11.
Cirl Bunting, 42.
Clangula glaucion, 159.
Coccothraustes chloris, 45.
„ *vulgaris*, 45.
Collared Pratincole, 78.
Columba œnas, 65.
„ *livia*, 66.
„ *palumbus*, 65.
„ *turtur*, 67.
Colymbus arcticus, 120.
„ *auritus β*, 124.
„ *glacialis*, 119.
„ *grylle*, 116.
„ *immer*, 119.
„ *septentrionalis*, 120.
„ *troile*, 116.
Coot, 73.
Coracias garrula, 60.
Cormorant, 125.
Corn-Bunting, 41.
Corncrake, 71.

Corvus corax, 52.
„ *cornix*, 53.
„ *corone*, 53.
„ *frugilegus*, 54.
„ *glandarius*, 55.
„ *graculus*, 50.
„ *monedula*, 55.
„ *pica*, 55.
Cotile riparia, 56.
Coturnix communis, 70.
„ *vulgaris*, 70.
Courser, Cream-coloured, 79.
Crake, Corn, 71.
„ Little, 72.
„ Spotted, 71.
Crane, 73.
Creeper Tree, 33.
Crex parva, 72.
„ *porzana*, 71.
„ *pratensis*, 71.
„ *pusilla*, 72.
Crossbill, 48.
Crow, 53.
„ Hooded, 53.
Cuckoo, 58.
Cuculus canorus, 58.
Curlew, 100.
„ Sandpiper, 93.
„ Stone, 77.
Cursorius gallicus, 79.
Cyanecula suecica, 24.
„ *wolfii*, 24.
Cygnus bewicki, 141.
„ *immutabilis*, 145.
„ *mansuetus*, 141.
„ *minor*, 141.
„ *musicus*, 140.
„ *olor*, 141.
Cymochorea leucorrhoa, 114.
Cypselus apus, 56.

Dabchick, 124.
Didapper, 124.
Dafila acuta, 153.
Dartford Warbler, 28.
Daulias luscinia, 23.
Dendrocopus major, 62.
„ *medius*, 63.
„ *minor*, 63.
„ *pubescens*, 64.
Dipper, 19.
Diver, Black-throated, 120.
„ Great Northern, 119.
„ Red-throated, 120.
Dotterel, 80.
Dove, Ring, 65.
„ Rock, 66.
„ Stock, 65.
„ Turtle, 67.
Dryocopus martius, 64.
Duck, Eider, 160.
„ Ferruginous, 157.
„ Gadwall, 152.
„ Garganey, 154.
„ Golden Eye, 159.
„ Long-tailed, 159.
„ Pintail, 153.
„ Pochard, 156.
„ „ Red-crested, 156.
„ Scaup, 158.
„ Shoveller, 152.
„ Tufted, 158.
„ White-eyed, 157.
„ Wild, 149.
Dunlin, 91.

Eagle, Golden, 1.
„ White-Tailed, 1.
Eider Duck, 160.
Emberiza cirlus, 42.
„ *citrinella*, 42.
„ *miliaria*, 41.
„ *nivalis*, 41.
„ *schœniclus*, 41.
Erithacus rubecula, 23.
„ *luscinia*, 23.
„ *suecica*, 24.
Eudromias morinellus, 80.

Falco æruginosus, 10.
„ *æsalon*, 5.

Falco apivorus, 9.
„ *buteo*, 8.
„ *candicans*, 3.
„ *cyaneus*, 11.
„ *fulvus*, 1.
„ *haliaëtus*, 2.
„ *islandus*, 3.
„ *islandicus*, 3.
„ *milvus*, 7.
„ *nisus*, 7.
„ *ossifragus*, 1.
„ *palumbarius*, 7.
„ *peregrinus*, 3.
„ *subbuteo*, 5.
„ *tinnunculus*, 6.
Falcon, Iceland, 3.
„ Peregrine, 3.
Fieldfare, 21.
Firecrest, 32.
Flycatcher, Pied, 18.
„ Spotted, 17.
Fratercula arctica, 117.
Fringilla cœlebs, 43.
„ *cannabina*, 47.
„ *carduelis*, 46.
„ *chloris*, 45.
„ *domestica*, 44.
„ *flavirostris*, 48.
„ *linaria*, 47.
„ *montifringilla*, 43.
„ *montium*, 48.
„ *rufescens*, 46.
„ *spinus*, 47.
Fulica atra, 73.
„ *chloropus*, 73.
Fuligula clangula, 159.
„ *cristata*, 158.
„ *ferina*, 156.
„ *ferruginea*, 157.
„ *fusca*, 161.
„ *glacialis*, 159.
„ *marila*, 158.
„ *nigra*, 161.
„ *nyroca*, 157.
„ *perspicillata*, 162.
„ *rufina*, 156.
Fulmar, 112.
Fulmarus glacialis, 112.

Gadwall, 152.
Gallinago cœlestis, 90.
„ *gallinula*, 91.
„ *major*, 89.
„ *media*, 90.
Gallinula chloropus, 73.
Gannet, 127.
Garden Warbler, 31.
Garganey, 154.
Garrulus glandarius, 55.
Gecinus viridis, 62.
Glareola pratincola, 78.
Glossy Ibis, 136.
Godwit, Bar-tailed, 99.
„ Black-tailed, 98.
Gold Crest, 32.
Golden Eagle, 1.
Golden Eye, 159.
Golden Oriole, 18.
„ Plover, 81.
Goldfinch, 46.
Goosander, 162.
Goose, Bernacle, 138.
„ Bean, 137.
„ Brent, 139.
„ Egyptian, 139.
„ Gray Lag, 135.
„ Pink-footed, 137.
„ White-fronted, 136.
Goshawk, 7.
Graculus carbo, 125.
„ *cristatus*, 126.
Grasshopper Warbler, 28.
Grebe, Eared, 123.
„ Great Crested, 121.
„ Little, 124.
„ Pied-billed, 124.
„ Red-necked, 122.
„ Sclavonian, 123.
Greenfinch, 45.
Greenshank, 98.
Green Woodpecker, 62.
Grouse, Black, 68.
Grus cinerea, 73.

Grus communis, 73.
Guillemot, Black, 116.
„ Common, 116.
„ Ringed, 116.
Gull, Black-headed, 107.
„ Common, 107.
„ Glaucous, 109.
„ Greater Black-backed, 108.
„ Herring, 108.
„ Ivory, 110.
„ Kittiwake, 109.
„ Lesser Black-backed, 108.
„ Little, 106.

Hæmatopus ostralegus, 84.
Haliaëtus albicilla, 97.
Harelda glacialis, 159.
Harrier, Hen, 11.
„ Marsh, 10.
„ Montagu's, 12.
Hawfinch, 45.
Hedge Sparrow, 22.
Helodromas ochropus, 96.
Hen Harrier, 11.
Heron, Common, 128.
„ Night, 130.
„ Purple, 129.
„ Squacco, 129.
Herring Gull, 108.
Hierofalco islandus, 3.
Himantopus avocetta, 84.
„ *candidus*, 85.
„ *melanopterus*, 85.
Hirundo apus, 56.
„ *riparia*, 56.
„ *rustica*, 56.
„ *urbica*, 56.
Hobby, 5.
Honey Buzzard, 9.
Hooded Crow, 53.
„ Merganser, 164.
Hoopoe, 59.
House Sparrow, 44.
Hydrochelidon hybrida, 103.
Hydrochelidon leucoptera, 102.
„ *nigra*, 102.

Ibis, Glossy, 136.
Ibis falcinellus, 136.
Iceland Falcon, 3.

Jynx torquilla, 65.
Jackdaw, 55.
Jack Snipe, 91.
Jay, 55.

Kentish Plover, 81.
Kestrel, 6.
Kingfisher, 61.
Kite, 7.
Kittiwake, 109.
Knot, 94.

Landrail, 71.
Lanius auriculatus, 17.
„ *collurio*, 16.
„ *excubitor*, 16.
„ *pomeranus*, 17.
„ *rufus*, 17.
„ *rutilus*, 17.
Lapwing, 83.
Lark, Shore, 40.
„ Sky, 40.
„ Wood, 40.
Larus argentatus, 108.
„ *canus*, 107.
„ *eburneus*, 110.
„ *fuscus*, 108.
„ *glaucus*, 109.
„ *marinus*, 108.
„ *minutus*, 106.
„ *nævius*, 108.
„ *ridibundus*, 107.
„ *tridactylus*, 109.
„ *rissa*, 109.
Lestris catarrhactes, 111.
„ *parasiticus*, 111.
„ *pomatorhinus*, 111.

Ligurinus chloris, 45.
Limnocryptes gallinula, 91.
Limosa ægocephala, 98.
„ *lapponica*, 99.
„ *melanura*, 98.
Linaria cannabina, 47.
Linnet, 47.
Linota cannabina, 47.
„ *flavirostris*, 48.
„ *rufescens*, 47.
Locustella locustella, 28.
„ *nævia*, 28.
Lomvia troile, 116.
Loxia chloris, 45.
„ *coccothraustes*, 45.
„ *curvirostra*, 48.
„ *pyrrhula*, 48.
Luscinia philomela, 23.

Machetes pugnax, 95.
Magpie, 55.
Manx Shearwater, 113.
Mareca penelope, 155.
Marsh Harrier, 10.
„ Tit, 35.
Martin, 56.
„ Sand, 56.
Meadow Pipit, 39.
Melizophilus undatus, 28.
Merganser, Hooded, 164.
„ Red-breasted, 163.
Mergulus alle, 117.
Mergus albellus, 164.
„ *cucullatus*, 164.
„ *merganser*, 162.
„ *serrator*, 163.
Merlin, 5.
Merops apiaster, 60.
Merula merula, 21.
„ *torquata*, 22.
Milvus ictinus, 7.
„ *regalis*, 7.
Missel-Thrush, 20.
Montagu's Harrier, 12.
Moorhen, 73.
Motacilla alba, 37.
Motacilla atricapilla, 30.
„ *boarula*, 38.
„ *cinerea*, 30.
„ *flava*, 38.
„ *lugubris*, 37.
„ *luscinia*, 23.
„ *melanope*, 38.
„ *modularis*, 22.
„ *œnanthe*, 26.
„ *phœnicurus*, 24.
„ *rayi*, 38.
„ *rubecula*, 23.
„ *rubetra*, 16.
„ *rubicola*, 25.
„ *salicaria*, 27.
„ *sibilatrix*, 31.
„ *sulphurea*, 38.
„ *trochilus*, 31.
„ *troglodytes*, 33.
„ *yarelli*, 37.
Muscicapa atricapilla, 18.
„ *grisola*, 17.

Night Heron, 130.
Nightingale, 23.
Nightjar, 56.
Numenius arquata, 100.
„ *phæopus*, 101.
Nuthatch, 33.
Nyctea nivea, 15.
„ *scandiaca*, 15.
Nycticorax griseus, 130.
„ *nycticorax*, 130.
Nyroca ferruginea, 157.

Œdemia fusca, 161.
„ *nigra*, 161.
„ *perspicillata*, 162.
Œdicnemus crepitans, 77.
„ *scolopax*, 77.
Oriole, Golden, 18.
Oriolus galbula, 18.
Osprey, 2.
Otis tarda, 74.
„ *tetrax*, 76.

Otocorys alpestris, 40.
Otus brachyotus, 14.
„ *vulgaris*, 14.
Ouzel, Ring, 22.
Owl, Barn, 13.
„ Long-eared, 14.
„ Scops, 15.
„ Short-eared, 14.
„ Snowy, 15.
„ Tawny, 13.
Oyster-Catcher, 84.

Pagophila eburnea, 110.
Pandion haliœetus, 2.
Panurus biarmicus, 36.
Partridge, 69.
„ Red-legged, 69.
Parus ater, 34.
„ *britannicus*, 34.
„ *cœruleus*, 34.
„ *caudatus*, 35.
„ *major*, 34.
„ *palustris*, 35.
Passer domesticus, 44.
„ *montanus*, 44.
Pastor, Rose-coloured, 49.
Pastor roseus, 49.
Peewit, 83.
Pelecanus bassanus, 127.
„ *carbo*, 125.
„ *graculus*, 126.
Perdix cinerea, 69.
„ *rufa*, 69.
Peregrine Falcon, 3.
Pernis apivorus, 9.
Petrel, Fork-tailed, 114.
„ Storm, 114.
Phalacrocorax carbo, 125.
„ *graculus*, 126.
Phalarope, Grey, 85.
„ Red-necked, 88.
Phalaropus fulicarius, 85.
„ *hyperboreus*, 88.
Phasianus Colchicus, 69.
Pheasant, 69.
Phyllopneuste rufa, 32.
Phyllopneuste sibilatrix, 31.
„ *trochilus*, 31.
Phylloscopus collybita, 32.
„ *rufus*, 32.
„ *sibilatrix*, 31.
„ *trochilus*, 31.
Pica caudata, 55.
„ *rustica*, 55.
Picus major, 62.
„ *martius*, 64.
„ *medius*, 63.
„ *minor*, 63.
„ *pubescens*, 64.
Picus viridis, 62.
Pigeon, Wood, 65.
Pintail, 153.
Pipit, Meadow, 39.
„ Richard's, 39.
„ Rock, 39.
„ Tree, 38.
Platalea leucorodia, 133.
Platea leucorodia, 133.
Plectrophanes nivalis, 41.
Plegadis falcinellus, 134.
Plover, Golden, 81.
„ Grey, 82.
„ Kentish, 81.
„ Ringed, 81.
Pochard, 156.
„ Red-crested, 156.
Podiceps auritus, 123.
„ *cornutus*, 123.
„ *cristatus*, 121.
„ *fluviatilis*, 124.
„ *griseigena*, 122.
„ *minor*, 123.
„ *nigricollis*, 123.
„ *rubricollis*, 122.
Podilymbus podiceps, 124.
Polish Swan, 145.
Pomatorhine Skua, 111.
Porzana maruetta, 71.
„ *parva*, 72.
Pratincola rubetra, 26.
„ *rubicola*, 25.
Pratincole, Collared, 78.
Procellaria leachii, 114.

Procellaria leucorrhoa, 114.
„ *pelagica*, 114.
„ *puffinus*, 112.
Puffin, 117.
Puffinus anglorum, 113.
„ *major*, 112.
„ *griseus*, 113.
„ *obscurus*, 113.
Purple Heron, 129.
Purple Sandpiper, 94.
Pyrrhocorax graculus, 50.
Pyrrhula europæa, 48.
„ *vulgaris*, 48.

Quail, 70.
Querquedula circia, 154.
„ *crecca*, 155.

Rail, Water, 72.
Rallus aquaticus, 72.
„ *crex*, 71.
Raven, 52.
Razor-Bill, 115.
Recurvirostra avocetta, 84.
Redbreast, 23.
Redpoll, Lesser, 47.
Redshank, 97.
„ Spotted, 98.
Redstart, 24.
„ Black, 25.
Redwing, 21.
Reed Bunting, 41.
„ Warbler, 27.
Reeve, 95.
Regulus cristatus, 32.
„ *ignicapillus*, 32.
Richard's Pipit, 39.
Richardson's Skua, 111.
Ring Dove, 65.
Ring Ouzel, 22.
Ringed Plover, 81.
Rissa tridactyla, 109.
Rock Dove, 66.
Rock Pipit, 39.
Roller, 60.
Rook, 54.
Ruff, 95.
Ruticilla phœnicurus, 24.
„ *suecica*, 24.
„ *tithys*, 25.

Salicaria locustella, 28.
„ *phragmitis*, 27.
„ *strepera*, 27.
Sanderling, 95.
Sand-Martin, 56.
Sandpiper, Common, 96.
„ Curlew, 93.
„ Green, 96.
„ Purple, 94.
„ Wood, 97.
Sandwich Tern, 104.
Saxicola œnanthe, 26.
„ *rubetra*, 26.
„ *rubicola*, 25.
Scaup, 158.
Sclavonian Grebe, 123.
Scolopax arquata, 100.
„ *calidris*, 97.
„ *gallinago*, 90.
„ *gallinula*, 91.
„ *lapponica*, 98.
„ *major*, 89.
„ *noveboracensis*, 99
„ *phœopus*, 101.
„ *rusticula*, 89.
Scops giu, 15.
„ *scops*, 15.
Scops Owl, 15.
Scoter, Common, 161.
„ Surf, 161.
„ Velvet, 161.
Sedge Warbler, 27.
Shag, 128.
Shearwater, Dusky, 113.
„ Great, 112.
„ Manx, 113.
Sheldrake, 147.
„ Ruddy, 146.
Shoveller, 152.
Shrike, Great Grey, 16.

Shrike, Red-backed, 16.
Siskin, 46.
Sitta cæsia, 33.
„ *europæa*, 33.
Skua, Great, 111.
„ Pomatorhine, 111.
„ Richardson's, 111.
Skylark, 40.
Smew, 164.
Snipe, Common, 90.
„ Great, 89.
„ Jack, 91.
„ Sabine's, 91.
„ Solitary, 89.
Snow Bunting, 41.
Snowy Owl, 15.
Sparrow, Hedge, 22.
„ House, 44.
„ Tree, 44.
Sparrow-Hawk, 7.
Spatula clypeata, 152.
Spoonbill, 133.
Spotted Crake, 71.
„ Flycatcher, 17.
„ Redshank, 98.
Squacco Heron, 129.
Squatarola helvetica, 82.
Starling, 49.
Stercorarius catarrhactes, 111.
„ *crepidatus*, 111.
„ *pomarinus*, 111.
„ *pomatorhinus*, 111.
„ *Richardsoni*, 111.
Sterna arctica, 105.
„ *cantiaca*, 104.
„ *caspia*, 103.
„ *dougalli*, 104.
„ *fissipes*, 102.
„ *fluviatilis*, 105.
„ *hirundo*, 105.
„ *hybrida*, 103.
„ *leucoptera*, 102.
„ *macrura*, 105.
„ *minuta*, 106.
„ *nævia*, 102.
„ *nigra*, 102.
Stilt, Black-winged, 85.
Stint, Little, 92.
Stock Dove, 65.
Stonechat, 25.
Stone Curlew, 77.
Stork, Black, 133.
„ White, 132.
Storm Petrel, 114.
Strepsilas interpres, 83.
Strix aluco, 13.
„ *brachyotus*, 14.
„ *flammea*, 13.
„ *otus*, 14.
Sturnus vulgaris, 49.
Sula bassana, 69.
Surf Scoter, 98.
Surnia nyctea, 15.
Swallow, 56.
Swan, Bewick's, 141.
„ Mute, 141.
„ Polish, 145.
„ Tame, 141.
„ Wild, 140.
Swift, 56.
Sylvia atricapilla, 30.
„ *cinerea*, 30.
„ *curruca*, 30.
„ *cyaneculus*, 24.
„ *hortensis*, 31.
„ *leucocyanea*, 24.
„ *provincialis*, 28.
„ *rufa*, 30.
„ *salicaria*, 31.
„ *sylviella*, 30.
„ *undata*, 28.
„ *Wolfii*, 24.
Syrnium aluco, 13.

Tachybaptes fluviatilis, 124.
Tadorna casarca, 146.
„ *cornuta*, 147.
„ *rutila*, 146.
„ *vulpanser*, 147.
Teal, 155.
Tern, Arctic, 105.
„ Black, 102.
„ Caspian, 103.

Tern, Common, 105.
„ Lesser, 106.
„ Roseate, 104.
„ Sandwich, 104.
„ Whiskered, 103.
„ White-winged Black, 102.
Tetrao coturnix, 70.
„ *perdix*, 69.
„ *rufus*, 69.
„ *tetrix*, 68.
Thalassidroma leucorrhoa, 114.
„ *pelagica*, 114.
Thrush, Missel, 20.
„ Song, 20.
Tinnunculus alaudarius, 6.
Titmouse, Bearded, 36.
„ Blue, 34.
„ Coal, 34.
„ Long-tailed, 35.
„ Great, 34.
„ Marsh, 35.
Totanus calidris, 97.
„ *canescens*, 98.
„ *fuscus*, 98.
„ *glareola*, 97.
„ *glottis*, 98.
„ *hypoleucus*, 96.
„ *melanura*, 98.
„ *ochropus*, 96.
„ *pugnax*, 95.
„ *rufus*, 99.
Tree Creeper, 33.
„ Sparrow, 44.
Tringa alpina, 91.
„ *canutus*, 94.
„ *cinclus*, 91, 92.
„ *hypoleucus*, 96.
„ *interpres*, 83.
„ *lobata*, 85.
„ *maritima*, 94.
„ *minuta*, 92.
„ *ochropus*, 96.
„ *striata*, 94.
„ *subarquata*, 93.
„ *temmincki*, 93.
„ *vanellus*, 83.
Tringoides hypoleucus, 96.
Troglodytes parvulus, 33.
Tufted Duck, 158.
Turdus iliacus, 21.
„ *merula*, 21.
„ *musicus*, 20.
„ *pilaris*, 21.
„ *roseus*, 49.
„ *torquatus*, 22.
„ *viscivorus*, 20.
Turnstone, 83.
Turtle Dove, 67.
Turtur auritus, 67.
„ *communis*, 67.
„ *vulgaris*, 67.
Twite, 48.
Upupa epops, 59.
Uria grylle, 116.
Uria troile, 116.

Vanellus cristatus, 83.
„ *vulgaris*, 83.

Wagtail, Grey, 38.
„ Pied, 37.
„ Yellow, 38.
„ White, 37.
Warbler, Black-cap, 25.
„ Blue-throated, 24.
„ Dartford, 28.
„ Garden, 31.
„ Grasshopper, 28.
„ Reed, 27.
„ Sedge, 27.
„ Willow, 31.
„ Wood, 31.
Water Rail, 72.
Waxwing, 36.
Wheatear, 26.
Whimbrel, 101.
Whinchat, 26.
Whitethroat, Common, 30.
„ Lesser, 30.
Whooper, 140.
Wigeon, 155.
Woodchat, 17.

Woodcock, 89.
Woodlark, 40.
Woodpecker, Black, 64.
„ Downy, 64.
„ Green, 62.
„ Spotted, 62.
„ Lesser spotted, 63.
Middle spotted, 63.
Wood Pigeon, 65.
Wren, 33.
„ Fire-crested, 32.
„ Golden-crested, 32.
Wryneck, 65.

YELLOWHAMMER, 42.

THE END.

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